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SCENES AND CHARACTERISTICS

OF

HINDOSTAN.

SCENES AND CHARACTERISTICS

OF

HINDOSTAN,

WITH

SKETCHES

OF

ANGLO-INDIAN SOCIETY.

88479

BY EMMA ROBERTS,

AUTHOR OF

"Memoirs of the Rival Houses of York and Lancaster," "Oriental Scenes," &c. &c.

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SCENES AND CHARACTERISTICS

OF

HINDOSTAN.

CHAPTER I.

SHOPS AND SHOPPING.

THE attentions and flattery which ladies, who possess any claims to admiration, receive in India, must be exceedingly gratifying to those who are consoled by such homage for the loss, or rather the curtailment, of one of the most delightful recreations of the sex—namely, *shopping*. In many parts of the Upper Provinces, years may elapse without affording an opportunity for the purchase of a single European article, excepting by commission. Friends at some distant station must be applied to; and should the supply of goods not be very superabundant, the refuse of the *box-wallah's* stores are rummaged over, and the purchaser must take what she can get, and be thankful.

Remote inland stations are very rarely visited by travelling merchants, who are afraid of incurring the expense of the conveyance of their goods upon an uncertainty, and thus trade is wholly confined to native dealers; a solitary *box-wallah* making his appearance occasionally, and asking upon his arrival such an extravagant price for his merchandize, as to render the purchase almost out of the question. Europeans are expected to pay exorbitantly for the products of their own country when the supply is scanty; and ladies have often the mortification of seeing an article, for which a very fair price has been refused, figuring on the person of one of their attendants, who has got it for next to nothing. Stations on the river are better supplied; few boats come up without bringing some small investment, by which the *dandies* (boatmen) hope to increase the profits of their voyage; and European shopkeepers frequently engage a *budgerow*, freighting the vessel with all sorts of articles for which there is any demand. Upon their arrival at the *ghaut*, they send a catalogue round to the different resident families, with the prices affixed, and too frequently a tantalizing notice, "all sold," against the items most in request.

The joy with which the arrival of any long-desired object is hailed, of which the attainment was nearly hopeless, is great. Ladies' slippers, especially of European manufacture, which happen to fit, seem like a blessing sent from heaven, after having gone almost barefoot in the soft, ill-shaped, spongy-soled shoes, of native construction. Even Chinese Crispins, though they are by far the best to be found in India, and bear a very high reputation, do not supply their fair customers with those Cinderella-like shoes, which alone are fitted for delicate feet. The upper portion may be constructed of beautiful and appropriate materials, satin or prunella; but there is always a falling-off in the soles, which are made of leather not sufficiently tanned, while the heels are never properly stiffened. Native shoemakers succeed better with gentlemen's boots, &c., those from Europe soon becoming too hard to be wearable. The happiest efforts of Hoby must be discarded for a base imitation, which has the merit of being more comfortable and better suited to the climate. A wide street in Calcutta, called the Cossitollah, is almost filled with the shops of Chinese shoe-makers, who make satin slippers, to order, at four shillings a pair, and prunella or jean for three. It seems a thriving

trade, these operatives being always well dressed in the costume of their country, wearing upper garments of silk when they walk abroad, or repair to European houses to take orders and measures. Some of the native shoes are very handsome, but they can only be worn by foreign residents as slippers when in their dressing gowns; the heel, though it may be raised at pleasure, is laid down across the inner part of the sole; the points are peaked, and turned up; and the whole is stiffened with embroidery, beneath which a very small portion of the cloth or velvet composing the shoe is to be seen.

The only shops in Calcutta, which make much shew on the outside, are those of the chemists and druggists, who bring all the London passion for display to a foreign country; they exhibit splendid and appropriate fronts duly embellished with those crystal vases, in which gems of the most brilliant dye appear to be melted. They are flourishing concerns, and the establishment of manufactories of soda-water has added not a little to their profits. Until of late years, this refreshing beverage, which forms one of the greatest luxuries in a tropical climate, was imported from Europe and sold at a very high price; there is now a large establishment at Futtyghur, which sends out supplies all over the country.*

An officer, having a high command at the time that Java was taken from the Dutch, found a mineral spring upon the island of bright sparkling bubbling water, as delicious and refreshing as that which, when bottled and stamped with the seal of the Duke of Nassau, travels to every quarter of the globe. He instantly made the discovery known to the captain of a trader, who freighted his vessel with it for the Calcutta market, where it obtained a rapid sale; but it does not appear that any permanent advantage was derived from this event, or that the Dutch government were aware of the existence of this fountain, which springs in the midst of a thick forest, and is in all probability only the resort of the poor natives in its vicinity.

The European jewellers' shops in Calcutta are large and handsome; they do not make any shew on the outside, but the interiors are splendid; the pavement of one or two is of marble, and the glass-cases on the various counters display a tempting variety of glittering treasures—diamonds of the first water, pearls of price, with every precious stone that can be named in rich profusion. The setting of these gems is exceedingly beautiful, and according to the most fashionable patterns of London or Paris, neither of those places boasting a more su-

perb assortment; but the prices are so ruinous, that it is wonderful where sufficient custom can be obtained to support establishments of the kind, of which there are at least four, in addition to the vast number of native artisans, who are not only exclusively employed by their own countrymen, but do a great deal of work for Europeans. Nothing could be more unconscionable than the profits which English jewellers sought and obtained for their goods in those days in which wealth flowed into Calcutta from many sources now cut off. Hitherto the European shopkeepers of Calcutta have transacted business in the most arbitrary manner, according to their own devices, without any reference to the regulations of trade at home.* They have

* The jewellers, especially, set no bounds to the exorbitance of their demands. The counterpart of a gold smelling-bottle set with precious stones, which was sold in London for fifteen pounds, had the modest price of seventy affixed to it in Calcutta. A common chain of hair, with a locket attached to it, of the plainest description, was charged seven pounds ten; not being executed according to order, it was sent back for alteration, and sixteen shillings added to the original bill, for the reparation of the blunders made by the workmen. A perfumer charged six shillings for an old bottle sent with a sample which was disapproved; and whole pages might be filled with similar instances of the utter disdain of the recognized principles of trade exhibited by the shopkeepers of Calcutta.

had no competion to dread excepting with the natives, whose retail business, though extensive, has been carried on in a silent, unostentatious manner.

Formerly, an idea was entertained that European goods could only be obtained in perfection from European dealers; but this notion is now exploded, and it will be seen, in the course of these remarks, that the shopkeepers of both countries obtain their supplies from the self-same sources. It is the policy of Europeans to cast a stigma on their native competitors; for, living at an expensive rate, they are obliged to charge enormously for their commodities; while the humbler-minded native, whose whole establishment is maintained at a very small cost, is enabled to sell at a fair profit. In their anxiety to secure the genuine productions of Hoffman, or some other noted London house, families have sent to the accredited agents of these traders in Calcutta, paying of course the highest price, and have afterwards discovered that the vender, being out of the article, has kept the messenger waiting, while he despatched one of his own people to the bazaar, where it was to be had for about a fifth part of the money put down to their account.

Fortunes, however, are not accumulated in the rapid manner which might be surmised from the

immense profits thus obtained; the goose is too often killed for the sake of its golden eggs, and customers are driven away in disgust by some piece of rapacity practised upon them. The princely style of living, also, affected by Calcutta shopkeepers, forms another drawback; they spend nearly as much as they gain, there being little or no difference between the establishment of a first-rate tradesman and that of a civil servant. The modest few, who are content to occupy their houses of business, and who do not display close carriages and services of plate until they have realized sufficient capital for the indulgence of such luxuries, must inevitably acquire considerable wealth; at least the opportunity has been offered under the old regime. But the stern necessity for retrenchment felt by so large a portion of the community, and the paralyzation of trade consequent on the late failures, together with the host of adventurers, which the alteration of the East-India Company's charter will in all probability send out, cannot fail to effect a striking change in the mercantile classes of Calcutta.

Next to the jewellers' shops, the most magnificent establishment in the city is that of the principal bookseller, Thacker & Co.; there are others of

inferior note, which have circulating libraries attached to them; but the splendid scale of this literary emporium, and the elegance of its arrangements, place it far above all its competitors. The profit obtained upon books is more moderate than that of any other European commodity, the retail prices being entirely regulated by those of the London market; rupees are reckoned for shillings; a book which is sold at the publishers at home for a pound, is charged at twenty rupees in Calcutta; and, considering the cost of freight and insurance, the perishable nature of the commodity, and the very great care requisite to secure both leaves and binding from being injured by damp, or devoured by insects, the price cannot be considered high. Books intended for sale must be carefully taken down from the shelf and wiped every day, and not only the outside, but the interior also, must be examined; a work of time which, in a large establishment, will occupy a great number of servants. The warping of splendid bindings in hot weather, and the rusts and mildews of the rainy season, must be taken into account; while the white ants being no respectors of engravings, notwithstanding the greatest care, a *hiatus* will sometimes be visible in the centre of some superb specimen of art from the

burin of Finden, Heath, or others of equal celebrity. The most expensive standard works are always procurable at this establishment; and though it may be cheaper to literary clubs and book societies to import their own supplies from London, so much must be left to the discretion of the agent employed, and, in the trade, there is such great temptation to get rid of usaleable volumes, that, in the end, little saving is effected.

Immense consignments of books sometimes come out to Calcutta, through different mercantile houses, which are sold by auction, and are often knocked down for a mere trifle. American editions of works of eminence also find their way into the market at a very cheap rate; and those who are content with bad paper, worse printing, and innumerable typographical errors, may furnish a library of the best authors at a small expense. The way in which a fashionable novel is got up is of little importance out of London, where an inelegant appearance would condemn the ablest production of the day; but in works of science, and those intended for the diffusion of useful knowledge, the mistakes and misprints, which are of constant occurrence in the American editions, may produce mischievous consequences. The inhabitants of Calcutta, or its

occasional residents, can alone be benefited by the shoal of books brought upon the coast by a fleet more than ordinarily freighted with literary merchandize. The supply at out-stations never is superabundant; it is only in such places as Meerut and Cawnpore, that booksellers' shops are to be found, and their catalogues are exceedingly scanty, people generally preferring to send to Calcutta than to take the chance of what may be obtained from a shopkeeper, who has not sufficient custom to lay in an extensive stock. At the Cape of Good Hope, the beach is said sometimes to be literally strewed with novels; an occurrence which takes place upon the wreck of a ship freighted from the warehouses of Paternoster Row; and certainly, in the streets of Calcutta, those who run may read; for books are thrust into the palanquin-doors, or the windows of a carriage, with the pertinacity of the Jews of London, by natives, who make a point of presenting the title-pages and the engravings upside down. Some of these books seem to be worthy of the Minerva press in its worst days; and it is rather curious that novels, which are never heard of in England, half-bound in the common pale blue covers so long exploded, and which do not figure in any of the advertisements ostentatiously put forth on

the wrappers of magazines, &c., are hawked about in the highways and byeways of Calcutta; and, as they are not expressly intended for foreign markets, it must be presumed, though the fact appears doubtful, that there is some sale for them at home, and that "Mysterious Involvements," "Errors of the Imagination," and "Delicate Dilemmas," still find supporters amongst the twaddlers of both sexes.

Though the jewellers must be styled the ruination shops of Calcutta, the establishment of Messrs. Tulloh and Co. may be called the Howell and James of the city of palaces. It is seldom without a vast concourse of carriages at the door, and the attractions within are of a superior order. On the ground-floor, a large but by no means handsome hall is set apart for auctions; a pulpit is erected in the centre, and every description of property (houses, horses, carriages, &c. down to thimbles and needles) comes under the hammer in the course of a short time; sales of all kinds being very frequent. The auction-room is accessible to males alone; it is open to the entrance-hall, but should a lady wander by mistake into the forbidden precincts, she becomes the talk of Calcutta; it is an act of *griffinism*, which strikes the whole community with astonishment and horror. A broad flight of stairs

leads to a suite of apartments above, in which there is a multifarious assortment of merchandize, oddly enough contrasted, the merest trumpery being often placed in juxtaposition with articles of great value. The walls are hung with framed engravings, many of them from plates nearly worn out, intermixed with others of a superior description, and a few bad paintings; an accurate knowledge of the art being confined to a very small number of persons, and the worst specimens having as good a chance, especially with the natives, of procuring purchasers, as those of a higher order. The tables and counters are covered with glass cases, containing various kinds of British and foreign *bijouterie;* others support immense quantities of China and glass, lamps, lustres, and mirrors; there are quantities of silk mercery and linen drapery, and upholstery of all sorts. At one time, a tempting collection of furniture *en suite*, fitted for a boudoir, was displayed in these ware-rooms, which would have formed an appropriate decoration for the most *recherché* cabinet of the fairest queen in the world. It consisted of a work, sofa, and circular table, six chairs, and a couch of the beautiful black lacker, which even Chinese art cannot imitate. The landscapes were of the richest and most splendid enamel,

and the cushions and draperies of pale green damask. They had been made in Japan, to order, from drawings or models sent from Calcutta, and were therefore of the most fashionable and approved form.

The gentleman who had despatched this splendid commission did not live to see it completed, and it was consigned by his executors to Messrs. Tulloh and Co., to be sold for the benefit of the estate. Many bright eyes were directed towards these elegant decorations, although the circumstance of their not being of European manufacture lessened their value in the estimation of the greater number of gazers, who would have preferred glittering trumpery from France. The expense rendered a speculation for the English market rather hazardous; the price of each chair was four pounds, which, together with the freight and the *ad valorem* duty imposed at the Custom-house of London, would have rendered it too costly for a fair chance of profit. Stuffed Chinese birds, beautifully arranged in glass cases, are amongst the rarities of Messrs. Tulloh's emporium; these were reckoned cheap at fifty pounds a case, and in all probability found purchasers in the captains of trading-vessels. Native sircars, who speak English, attend to ac-

quaint the visitors with the different prices of the articles, but there are no chairs for the accommodation of the ladies, who in the hottest weather must either walk about, stand, or sink exhausted upon the stairs. Large consignments of goods, to be sold by auction upon some future day, are frequently exhibited; but ladies, however anxious they may be to become purchasers, are not permitted to select any of the lots at a fair price, although the sale may be so peremptory as to amount almost to giving them away. Such is the despotism of custom at Calcutta! Flaming advertisements, which put the ornate and elaborate productions of George Robins to shame, draw crowds of carriages to Tulloh's rooms; and great is the disappointment of the fair visitants, when, as it frequently happens, they see the old-remembered articles in their accustomed places, as well known as the Ochterlony monument, with as little chance of ever being removed from their site. No abatement whatever is made in the price, in consequence of the dilapidations which time may have occasioned; bargains are only to be procured at auctions, and the stock remains on hand during time immemorial, while newer and more fashionable importations, of the same nature, are knocked down

to the highest bidder for any thing they will fetch.

Mackenzie and Lyall, and Leyburn and Co., have establishments similar to that of Messrs. Tullohs, but neither so extensive nor so splendid. The sircars in attendance,—fine gentlemen, profusely arrayed in white muslin, and evidently fattening upon their profits,—assume a cavalier air, and seem to take any disparagement of their employers' goods in high dudgeon. Auction-rooms are attached to the premises of both these parties and the heads of all the establishments are expected to officiate in turn. This is a *sine qud non*, and many gentlemen, who would otherwise have devoted their time and property to mercantile pursuits, have been prevented from entering into a partnership with these firms, in consequence of the unpleasant nature of the duties. According to the old system, an auctioneer, however respectable his connexions might be, and whatever his previous rank, was not admitted into society. The rigid exclusiveness of etiquette has somewhat relaxed in the present day, and military and civil servants do not object to meet at other houses, or receive at their own, those persons who were formerly considered to be quite beyond the pale. Still the

ascent of the rostrum is considered to entail the loss of caste; and it is supposed that the rigid enforcement of the rule is made to preserve equality amongst the partners of the establishment, who are or were all rendered equally unpresentable at the vice-regal court.

Besides the quantity of goods daily disposed of at auctions, there are vast accumulations, which seem to be utterly forgotten, in the *godowns*, or warehouses, belonging to every merchant. The terms applied to these receptacles is a corruption of the Malay word *Gadong*. The ransacking of the vaults and store-places of Calcutta, and the discovery of all the strange things which the rats and white-ants have left unconsumed, would be an amusing employment. What a quantity of forgotten lumber would see the light! Patent lever fids, and other vaunted inventions, equally at a discount, lie mouldering in these recesses with things of greater value and utility, crates of china and glass, hardware, perfumery, &c. &c. Perhaps, in no other place are there such numerous commodities put out of sight, and totally out of memory, as at Calcutta. The consignees who have failed to dispose of goods according to their invoice prices, and who have not received instructions to

sell them by auction, allow them to choke up their warehouses without an effort for their rescue from oblivion. All that is perishable is, of course, speedily demolished; a destiny little anticipated by the sanguine speculator, who perchance hoped to lay the foundation of his wealth in the Calcutta market.

Though this market is sometimes overstocked with the luxuries of the table, yet as the "eaters of ham and the eaters of jam," as the European community have been styled by a witty writer in the *Bengal Annual*, are insatiate in their demand for the sweet and savoury importations from oil, pickle, and confectionary-shops, they form the safest investment. Upon the arrival of a ship freighted with preserved salmon, lobsters, oysters, herrings, and other exotic fish; hams, reindeer-tongues, liqueurs, dried fruits, and a long list of foreign dainties, the wholesale purchaser, anxious to sell them in their freshest and purest state, usually puts forth a series of advertisements, in which the art of puffing is carried to its fullest extent. Nothing is too absurd to be printed in the Calcutta newspapers; the vauntings of Day and Martin must hide their diminished heads before those which figure in our eastern periodicals. Numerous pens are engaged

in the composition; the young men in the "Buildings," the grand patronizers of tiffins and suppers, frequently lending their assistance at a sounding paragraph, and encouraging the perpetration of divers execrable jokes, and familiar invitations in the worst taste imaginable. Cheese, in these shops, is sold for three shillings a-pound; ham frequently at four, and every thing else in proportion.

Happily, the economical part of society may furnish their tables at a cheaper rate. The native bazaars of Calcutta, in which European goods are sold, though not very tempting in appearance, are well stocked. They consist of a collection of narrow streets, furnished with shops on either side, some of which have shew-rooms on the upper floor, but all darker, dirtier, and more slovenly than those in the fashionable quarters of the city. The *Soodagurs*, fat, sleek, well-dressed men, clad in white muslin, and having the mark of their caste (if Hindoos) painted in gold upon the forehead and down the nose, stand at their doors, inviting customers to enter. Capital bargains are to be obtained by those who are willing to encounter the heat, fatigue, and abominations which beset their path. It is not, however, necessary to inspect these districts in person, as a sircar may be em-

ployed, or samples of the goods sent for. The millinery exhibited in these places is absolutely startling, and people are puzzled to guess how it can ever be disposed of; but this mystery is solved by an apparition not unfrequent, a half (or rather whole) caste female,—for many of the Portuguese are blacker than the natives,—belonging to the lower ranks, attired in the European costume. No Christian of European descent, however remote, ever wears a native dress. Rich Indo-British ladies attire themselves in the latest and newest fashions of London and Paris, greatly to their disadvantage, since the Hindostanee costume is so much more becoming to the dark countenances and pliant figures of Eastern beauties: those of an inferior class content themselves with habiliments less in vogue, caring little about the date of their construction, provided the style be European. At native festivals, the wives of Portuguese drummers, and other functionaries of equal rank, are to be seen amid the crowd, arrayed in gowns of blue satin, or pink crape, fantastically trimmed; with satin slippers on their feet, their hair full-dressed, and an umbrella carried over their heads by some ragged servant, making altogether an appearance not very unlike that of Maid Marian on May-day.

To these ladies, in process of time, are consigned the blonde lace, or silver lama dresses, to which, on their first arrival in India, so exorbitant a price was affixed, that nobody could venture to become a purchaser. After displaying themselves for years in a glass case at Leyburn's, they suddenly disappeared, remaining in the deepest oblivion, until some lucky *box-wallah* procures a customer unacquainted with the changes which have taken place in the London fashions since the period of their debût from the *boutique* of a first-rate professor.

Amidst an intolerable quantity of rubbish, articles of value may be picked out; the piece-goods are equal to those which are obtainable in magazines of higher pretensions, and the hams, cheeses, oil-man's stores, &c., are of the best quality; and furniture, palanquins, in short, all the necessaries and conveniencies of life, are to be found at these bazaars. The shopkeepers are, for the most part, very rich native settlers in Calcutta, having derived more benefit from the increasing opulence of the city, than any other class of its inhabitants, since the greater part of the wealth flows through their hands. Having large capitals, they are enabled to purchase the whole of a captain's investments direct from the ship; the principal European establish-

ments do the same, putting about twenty per cent. upon the original price. Many of an inferior class, having no ready money, are obliged to go into the China bazaar, and buy from the natives (perhaps upon credit) those European commodities they are unable to procure at first-hand; yet these men live in the same style as the large capitalist, driving about in the streets in buggies, and disdaining the thrift and economy which their brethren at home are compelled to practise.

Under the British Government, the Mussulmans or Hindoos, who have accumulated property, are not afraid of making a display of it in their shops or warehouses; destitute of those apprehensions which, in the days of anarchy and despotism, embittered the enjoyment of riches, they pursue their avocations with a keenness and avidity which bid defiance to all rival efforts. Ready-money customers do well to make their purchases of persons willing to sell at a fair profit; but there is some danger of getting into debt, or borrowing largely from a Hindoo. The Jews—a class of persons with whom, in other places, pecuniary dealings are to be dreaded—form in Calcutta so small a portion of the community as scarcely to be worth naming. They have little chance against the sircars, banyans, and

money-changers professing Hindooism, whose usurious practices far exceed any thing related of the scattered tribes of Israel.

Shops at up-country stations, without being half so well supplied, are generally ten times dearer than those of Calcutta. Raspberry jam, the preserve most in request at an Indian table, bears a most preposterous price; a jar, which is sold in London for about four shillings, will cost twenty-four, and can never be purchased for less than sixteen. The charge at Cawnpore for half-a-pint of salad-oil is six shillings; and, in a camp, a two-pound square jar of pickles, and a pine cheese, have sold for three pounds each—an act of extravagance in the consumer which is without any excuse, the native pickles being infinitely superior to those brought from England, and the Hissar cheeses of far better quality than the importations, which are always either dry or rancid.

There are at least half-a-dozen French and English milliners of note settled in Calcutta, some of whom make regular voyages to Paris and London, for the purchase of their own investments. The displays of their shew-rooms materially depend upon the shipping arrivals; sometimes there is a "beggarly account of empty boxes," and at others

the different apartments are replete with temptations. The high rents of houses, in good situations, in Calcutta, and the necessity of keeping large establishments of servants, preclude the possibility of obtaining goods of any kind, at these fashionable marts, at low prices. The milliners of Calcutta seem to depend entirely upon supplies from Europe; they have never thought of enlisting Chinese manufactures into their service. Large importations of silks, satins, damasks, crapes, &c., arrive from Canton, and some of the higher orders of native merchants have pattern-books to shew, filled with the richest of these fabrics woven in the most exquisite patterns; but the ladies of Calcutta disdain to appear in dresses which would be eagerly coveted by those of the great capitals of Europe. Chinese silks and satins are scarcely to be seen in any of the shops; if they should be wanted, they must be sought out like the Cashmeres, the Dacca muslins, and the Benares tissues, concealed from public view in chests and warehouses. At half the expense of their present apparel, the Calcutta belles might be more splendidly attired than any female community in the world; but the rage for European frippery is so great, that the most magnificent fabrics of the East would have no chance

against a painted muslin. If these rich products were more seen, the purchase would be more highly appreciated; but the custom of the country, founded in all probability on the deleterious effects of the climate, forbids the outward shew which forms the characteristic, and the attraction also, of a London shop. The dampness of the atmosphere of Bengal is ruinous to every delicate article exposed to it; and the natives of India have not yet learned the methods by which careful English dealers preserve their stock from dust and dilapidation, nor can they acquire these arts from their European employers, who are in a great measure ignorant of the principles of trade, and are induced to become general dealers in consequence of finding it the most profitable speculation. The indolence occasioned by the heat is usually too great to admit of much personal superintendence; the details are left to native assistants, and, with very few exceptions, every kind of merchandize is huddled together in confusion, or arranged in the most tasteless manner.

The jewellers and the establishment of the leading bookseller have already been exempted from this charge, and the praise which their respective owners merit, must be awarded to the European

proprietors of a shop, the prettiest in Calcutta, devoted wholly to the sale of Chinese goods. There is a constant succession of new articles to be seen in this shop, captains of traders and people desirous of sending presents to England, speedily sweeping away the whole stock. The goods are charged at about double the price for which they may be purchased at Canton; but there are always many pretty things which come within the reach of humble purses, and the privilege of looking over some of the most beautiful specimens of human ingenuity is worth a few rupees. This shop, though not large, occupies a good situation upon the Esplanade; it is remarkably clean and cheerful, offering a striking contrast to the dens of dirt and darkness, which in many parts of the city look more like rat-holes than the emporiums of European goods. The door is generally thronged with carriages, and in the hot season there is some difficulty in getting up to it; the *garreewans*, or coachmen, of Calcutta, ignorant of the etiquette practised in England, do not draw off at the approach of another vehicle with a party to set down or take up. For want of some arrangement of this kind, there are perpetual contests for mastery; and timid people, or those who have a thin attendance of servants to clear the way,

prefer walking a few yards to disputing possession with the carriage at the door. In narrow passages, equipages are obliged to drive away to make room for each other; but where space will permit, it seems a point of honour amongst the coachmen to cause as much confusion and hubbub as possible. Every body drives on which side the road he pleases to take, either left or right; and, considering the vast number of carriages which assemble in the public places, it is wonderful how few accidents occur.

During the cold season, ladies may shop in Calcutta without any personal inconvenience, and many are not to be deterred by the heat from pursuing so favourite an amusement. The arrival of adventurers from France, who hire apartments for the display of their goods, is a great temptation to venture out; these people, who are anxious to get away again with the vessel which brought them, usually undersell the regular shopkeepers, disposing of the stock remaining on hand by public outcry, a favourite method all over India. Upon some of these occasions, amazing bargains are to be had, of which the natives usually avail themselves; boatmen and others upon the very smallest wages being enabled to make purchases, which they are

certain of selling to advantage in the upper country, though at a hundred per cent. below the regular price. English captains of vessels have been known to open a warehouse on their own account, and to sell their investments by retail; but whether the experiment answered or failed, the example has not been generally followed. The first arrivals in the market, or those freighted with goods in demand, of course, speedily get rid of their cargo; while the remainder are frequently compelled to make great sacrifices. The pale ale, so much in request at an Indian table, is often sold at a dead loss, and may be had occasionally at Calcutta at three or four rupees a-dozen to the consumer; but it is never procurable at the same comparative rate of cheapness in the Mofussil. Should the new steam-boats, which have been sent out from England, prove successful in the navigation of the Ganges to Allahabad or Cawnpore, vast additions and improvements will take place in the shops already established at those and the intermediate stations. The reduced rate of European goods, and the more general introduction of articles of native manufacture, will enable the British residents of India to live as well upon inferior allowances, as they were accustomed to do in the days of splendid incomes

and profuse expenditure. Mango, corunder, hybiscus, guava, and various other jams and jellies, when prepared without an admixture of spice, are quite equal to the finest of Hoffman's fruits. Hams and bacon can be as well cured in India as in England; and the table at least may be independent of every European article excepting wine and beer, while very excellent cyder may be made from melons.

All the musical instruments used in India are importations: as yet no manufactory of the kind has been ventured upon. Very few carriages are brought from England, there being a large coach-maker's establishment of great celebrity in Calcutta, besides others in different parts of the country; some maintained by Europeans, and others by natives, who work from the instructions of gentlemen, especially artillery and engineer officers, possessing amateur acquaintance with the art. All sorts of harness and saddlery have attained great perfection at Cawnpore, where the natives work upon leather with much success, producing such delicate articles as white kid gloves of a very fair quality; their saddles and bridles are exceedingly neat and elegant, and if not so durable as those of English make, are infinitely cheaper. The price of a hunt-

ing-saddle and bridle imported from England is twelve pounds, while those manufactured at Cawnpore may be had for one, equally good in appearance, though they probably will not last quite so long. The great demand for leather at Cawnpore has proved very fatal to troop-horses, and those of travellers proceeding to that station. The villages, at the distance of a march or two, are inhabited by gangs of miscreants, who do not hesitate to procure so lucrative an article of commerce by the most nefarious means. It is their custom to poison the wells, or otherwise to administer some deleterious mixture to the horses encamped in their neighbourhood. They either die immediately, or drop upon the road during their next day's march, and their skins are stripped off and sold at Cawnpore. It is seldom that a native of India can be detected in his knaveries. After many vain attempts to discover the perpetrators of these enormities, gentlemen who lost their horses came to a determination to defeat the projects of the wretches by whom they had been destroyed. Upon the death of any animal, they had it flayed instantly by their own people, and either carried away the skin or caused it to be burned upon the spot. This plan has at length proved effectual: the horse-killers, tired of their

vain attempts to secure the object of their villainy, allow the most tempting studs to pass unmolested, the *thanadars* in the neighbourhood having received orders to warn all travellers of the danger, and to recommend them, in the event of any casualty amongst their cattle, not to leave the skin behind. There is an exceedingly good English coach-maker settled at Cawnpore, and very excellent and elegant carriages are made at Bareilly, a place famous for the beauty of its household furniture, which is painted and lackered with much taste, and in a peculiar manner.

CHAPTER II.

GHAZEEPORE.

THE precious incense of the rose, the *atta-gool*, so celebrated throughout all the civilized parts of the world, is produced in considerable quantities in the gardens round Ghazeepore. A paradise of roses conveys enchanting ideas of floral pomp and luxuriance to the mind. Fancy decks the scene with brilliant hues;—parterres, where idle zephyrs wanton through the day;—canopies, flinging their living tapestry of buds and interweaving leaves over banks and beds strewed with the blossoms which the sighing breeze has scattered. Sober reality, however, dispels these gay illusions; the cultivation of roses at Ghazeepore is a mere matter of business; and the extensive fields, planted with the brightest ornament of the garden, do not invest the station with the attractions which are conjured up by a poetical imagination.

The Indian rose, though its very name seems to imply distinction, can only sustain a comparison

with its European sisters in the fragrance which it yields. It is beautiful, for could a rose be otherwise? but, excepting at Agra, it does not attain to the magnificent size common in England, nor does it present the infinite varieties which adorn our gardens. The cultivators of India are content to take what the hand of nature has given them, and resort to few artificial aids for the improvement of her lavish beauties: to a large majority, the rose appears to be too valuable a plant to be made the mere embellishment of a bouquet, and, for commercial purposes, that which they have found indigenous to the soil proves quite sufficient.

England is not the land of romance, but her hop-grounds are far more beautiful than the vine-wreathed vallies of France, or the rose-gardens which bloom in the East; unfortunately they are associated with breweries and ale-casks, and want the classic elegance which surrounds the bowl, brimmed with the red grape's ruby flood,—the lingering scent which clings round odours crushed, and makes them sweeter still. The rose of an English cottage, clambering from lattice to lattice, and mantling over the rustic porch in bright redundance, is infinitely more attractive than its In-

dian namesake. We do not see the roses of Oriental climes spreading themselves over arches, or flinging down their crimson wealth in rich red clusters. They bloom sparingly upon a low shrub, which is kept to a dwarfish size by the gardener's knife, and the full-blown flowers being carefully gathered every morning, the trees rarely present the luxuriance of loaded boughs drooping beneath the weight of their silken treasures.

The roses of Ghazeepore are planted formally, in large fields, occupying many hundred acres of the adjacent country. The flush of their flowers, when opening to the morning ray, and enamelling the verdant carpet of green spread over a sun-lit plain, cannot fail to delight the eye; but would afford far greater pleasure if diversified with bowers and labyrinths, trellises hung with garlands, and crimson clusters peeping between the luxuriant foliage wreathing over long arcades. If the voluptuous Moghuls ever celebrated a festival of roses in so appropriate a scene of their Indian conquests, no traces or memorials now remain to fill the spot with recollections of the Floral fête. The gathering of the flowers, either at its commencement or its close, is unaccompanied by those bright revels, which seem to be almost inseparable from a harvest

of roses. No gay troops of youths and maidens pile the glowing treasures in osier baskets, or wreathe them round their brows. The work is performed, systematically, by a multitude of poor labourers, who, while carefully securing every full-blown flower, think of nothing except the *pice* which will repay their easy toil.

The first process which the roses undergo is that of distillation. They are put into the alembic with nearly double their weight of water. The *goolāābee pāānee* (rose-water) thus obtained is poured into large shallow vessels, which are exposed uncovered to the open air during the night. The *narnes*, or jars, are skimmed occasionally; the essential oil floating on the surface being the precious concentration of *aroma*, so highly prized by the worshippers of the rose. It takes 200,000 flowers to produce the weight of a rupee in *atta*. This small quantity, when pure and unadulterated with sandal-oil, sells upon the spot at 100 rupees (£10): an enormous price, which, it is said, does not yield very large profits. A civilian, having made the experiment, found that the rent of land producing the above-named quantity of *atta*, and the purchase of utensils, alone, came to £5; to this sum the hire of labourers remained still to be

added, to say nothing of the risk of an unproductive season.

The Damascus, or rose of Sharon, is the flower in most esteem in some parts of India; in others, the common cabbage, or hundred leaved rose is the favourite. The oil produced by the above-mentioned process is not always of the same colour, being sometimes green, sometimes bright amber, and frequently of a reddish hue. When skimmed, the produce is carefully bottled, each vessel being hermetically sealed with wax; and the bottles are then exposed to the strongest heat of the sun during several days.

Young ladies in England, who spend the rosy months of June and July in the country, and who can command a hot-house where the thermometer rises to 100° or 120°, might try the experiment of manufacturing *atta:* 200,000 roses could easily be obtained by levying contributions upon friends and neighbours; and from the rose-water they would yield, poured into China vases, and placed amongst the pine-apples, delicate hands might be employed to extract the floating essence.

Rose-water which has been skimmed is reckoned inferior to that which retains its essential oil, and is sold at Ghazeepore at a lower price; though,

according to the opinion of many persons, there is scarcely, if any, perceptible difference in the quality. A *seer* (a full quart) of the best may be obtained for eight *annas* (about 1*s.*). Rose-water enters into almost every part of the domestic economy of the natives of India: it is used for ablutions, in medicine, and in cookery. Before the abolition of *nuzzurs* (presents), it made a part of the offerings of persons who were not rich enough to load the trays with gifts of greater value. It is poured over the hands after meals; and at the festival of the *Hoolee*, all the guests are profusely sprinkled with it. Europeans, suffering under attacks of prickly heat, find the use of rose-water a great alleviation. Natives take it internally for all sorts of complaints; they consider it to be the sovereignest thing on earth for an inward bruise, and *eau de Cologne* cannot be more popular in France than the *goolābee pāānee* in India. Rose-water, also, when bottled, is exposed to the sun for a fortnight at least.

The environs of Ghazeepore are exceedingly pretty, planted with fine forest trees, which may be supposed to bear the nests of the *bulbul*, haunting the gardens of the rose; though, whether the nightingales of the East are found in this district

I cannot vouch with any degree of certainty, having only heard and seen those divine warblers in cages. Birds, however, abound; the branches are loaded with the pendulous nests of the crested sparrow, and the blue jay sports in dangerous proximity to the Ganges, being selected at a barbarous Hindoo festival as a victim to the cruel Doorga. At the annual celebration of her inhuman rites, these beautiful birds are thrown into the river; and though sometimes rescued by Europeans, who do not share in the superstition that it is unlucky to intermeddle with the vengeful goddess's offerings, they seldom survive the immersion. There are some fine old banian-trees in the neighbourhood of Ghazeepore; one, in particular, which overshadows a *ghaut* in an adjacent village, may be styled the monarch of the Ganges. This tree, as well as the peepul, is sacred; and when a Brahmin takes up his abode under its boughs, it becomes an asylum for all sorts of animals: the fine old patriarch of the woods near Ghazeepore is the haunt of innumerable monkies, which actually crowd the branches, and gambol along the steps of the *ghaut*, perch upon its balustrades, and play their antics with the bathers in perfect security, and in multitudes which remind the gazer of rabbits in a warren.

Snakes are very numerous in this part of the country, and their deadly enemy the mungoose is frequently seen on the watch for the victims which he pursues with unrelenting animosity. Both natives and Europeans, who have witnessed the encounters of these extraordinary animals with venomous reptiles, are convinced that the mungoose is acquainted with an antidote to the poison, which medical men of the highest eminence have pronounced to be mortal, refusing, in many instances, to yield to the strongest repellent known (*eau de luce*) a remedy sometimes administered with success. It is certain that the mungoose frequently receives very severe bites in its conflicts with the snake; that after being wounded it is seen to retire, as it is supposed for the purpose of applying the antidote, and that it will return again to the charge with unflinching vigour, never relinquishing the fight until it has succeeded in destroying its opponent. The mungoose is often domesticated as a pet, for the purpose of keeping houses free from snakes; and thus amateurs have constant opportunities of witnessing its combats with the cobra de capello. Its movements are so exceedingly rapid, that no one has yet been able to follow it to the plant which yields the specific; and scientific men

have not hitherto thought it worth their while to ascertain this interesting point by a series of experiments.

Ghazeepore is the quarter of a King's regiment of infantry, and is reckoned a very desirable station, on account of the easy nature of the duties, and the healthiness of the climate. In times of peace, upon the landing of European corps of foot soldiers, it has usually been the custom to allow them to make the tour of the provinces by slow degrees, resting, during intervals of two or three years, either at Berhampore, or Boglipore, on their way to Dinapore, Ghazeepore, Cawnpore, and Meerut. This practice, however, has been departed from in the case of the 26th regiment, which, almost immediately after its arrival at Fort William, was marched up to Kurnaul, a frontier station on the distant borders of the Company's territories. The Upper Provinces being considered infinitely more healthy than the low plains of Bengal, it would be advisable, if not interfering with the welfare of the service, to send King's corps into the interior at the first season in which it would be practicable to perform a long march. The process of acclimation is attended with a melancholy catalogue of deaths, when it is carried on in the damp

districts near the presidency. Though Dinapore has the advantage of a dry sandy soil, cholera is no stranger to its cantonments; and it is not until the arrival of a regiment of Europeans at Ghazeepore, that much hope can be entertained of clean bills of health in the medical report.

King's troops are very expensive appendages to the Company's territories; the care and attention necessary for the preservation of their lives, generally has the effect of unfitting them for the duties which a soldier is called upon to perform in a colder climate; while, in despite of the pains taken to ensure their health and comfort, their existence in India must be far less pleasurable than a life of toil and hardship under a more genial atmosphere. During many months, European soldiers are doomed to spend their whole time in imprisonment and idleness; their parades take place very early in the morning, and after the daily exercise is over, they must confine themselves to their barracks. They are strictly enjoined not to proceed to the bungalows of their officers upon duty, in the heat of the sun, without an umbrella, and it is no uncommon sight to meet a private with a black attendant carrying a *chattah* (awning) over his head. The penny literature of the day would be

invaluable, could it reach the stations of European soldiers in India with the regularity and cheapness of its production in England, for reading is their grand resource. Happy are those who find in the Bible every book they need! Religious exercises form the consolation and the occupation of many; but there is still a very large majority who require other aids to fill up their time. Books are, unfortunately, rather a scarce commodity, and notwithstanding the establishment of regular libraries, want of funds renders the supply inadequate to the demand.

Commanding officers have usually the good sense to encourage, or at least to sanction, intellectual amusements. In many places, the soldiers have been permitted to construct a theatre for their own performances, and at others they are allowed the use of that belonging to the station. The prices of admission are generally sufficient to cover the expenses, though in India, as well as in England, dramatic speculations are often found to be losing concerns, and scarcely any manager or managing committee can contrive to keep out of debt. Infinite pains are taken to divest theatrical amusements of the danger which might arise from love-scenes between married women and gay Lo-

tharios. The soldiers' wives are not permitted to enact the heroines in dramatic entertainments, lest it should lead to deviations from the path of duty; and when female characters cannot be cut out, they are performed by beardless youths, much to the deterioration of the spectacle, although the principle which deprives the Mofussil stage of feminine attraction cannot be too highly commended.

A theatre affords interesting occupation to numbers of poor exiled soldiers, who would otherwise be devoured with *ennui*. Those who can handle a brush are employed in painting the scenes; less accomplished amateurs are too happy to be allowed to shift them; and the orchestra is open to musical aspirants, the Orphiï of the Mofussil, who, màugre the disadvantages of instruments which will not keep a single instant in tune, beguile many weary hours with the practice necessary for a grand display. Petting animals also offers a pleasing source of employment to a soldier; great varieties of parrots, highly accomplished in the vulgar tongue, are to be found in the barracks, and the master frequently becomes too much attached to a docile and apt scholar to part with it, though tempted by a high price: twenty rupees (£2) being usually given for a well-taught bird. Constant attention

and untiring patience are necessary for the instruction of the feathered race; and as the organ of speech is much more strongly developed in the skulls of some paroquets than in those of others, an acquaintance with phrenology would save an infinity of labour. The parrot's cage is hung in some dark place, not unfrequently down a well, while the tutor, lying on the brink, repeats the same sentence over and over again for an hour together. The education of parrots on the continent of India is almost wholly confined to Europeans; though they are frequently kept in a state of captivity by the natives, and are objects of veneration to some castes of Hindoos, they are rarely if ever taught to speak by them. All their cares appear to be lavished upon the hill mynahs, beautiful large black birds with a yellow mark on each side of the head, which are easily trained to the performance of a variety of amusing tricks, and turn out far better orators than the paroquets.

That pining after home, which, in hearts endued with sensibility, too often sows the seeds of disease and death, is acutely felt by a large portion of the King's soldiers, whose terms of service in India being seldom less than twenty years, nearly amounts to a sentence of perpetual banishment. Excepting

during a war, when hardships, however severe, are rendered endurable by the spirit-stirring incidents attendant on a hot campaign; destitute of all excitement, bold and hardy men drag out a life of inglorious ease, in a completely artificial state of existence, preserved, as it were, in glass cases for times of need. Their society at all periods is exclusively military; they have no communication, as at home, with their fellow-citizens; no jovial meetings with strange faces in public-houses; no large assemblages of persons belonging to their own class at fairs and festivals. Their wants are carefully attended to, but their enjoyments are few; beer is a luxury which their purses can rarely command; they have not many opportunities of forming matrimonial connexions with people of their own colour, and life must be irksome to all who cannot give themselves up to sedentary employments. Long habit lends its aid to the subduing influence of the climate to reconcile the greater number of European soldiers to this state of vegetation; they are conscious that a protracted residence in India has rendered them unequal to the performance of military duties elsewhere; and when, at length, a regiment receives orders to embark for England, numerous volunteers are found willing to

remain in the country in which they have worn out the fairest portion of their existence. The ties which bound them to their native land have all been severed; the fond hopes which they cherished of an early return, laden with the spoils of conquered rajahs, have melted away, and they are content at last to relinquish the fair visions of home and happiness, for the solid provision which can be attained in India. These are usually steady men, of sober views and habits, who have outlived the illusions of their youth, and are satisfied to have a choice of minor evils. Warmer temperaments indulge more vivid expectations; to them the name of *home* acts like a spell; painful experience has not yet taught them to anticipate disappointment, and they return with the same bright hopes which led them gladly to seek a land whose splendid promises remain unfulfilled. A few, driven to despair by the melancholy prospect of interminable exile, unable to await the slow approach of their recall, and allured by the flowry descriptions of Australia, plunge into crime for the purpose of exchanging honourable servitude in India for a felon's lot in a climate resembling that of England. It is no very unusual circumstance for a soldier to attempt the life of his officer or his comrade, in the

hope of being transported to a country possessing so many features akin to the land of his birth; and even the punishment of death is to some less terrible than the prospect of eternal banishment from "the home they left with little pain."

In no other country in the world can the wives and children of European soldiers enjoy the comfort and happiness which await them in India. The lot of the latter is peculiarly fortunate, for they have no reminiscences of another land to poison the blessings of competence and freedom from the pressure of early cares; schools are established in every regiment for the instruction of children of both sexes. The education of persons belonging to their class in society, can be carried on as well in India as in England: they are taught to make themselves useful; the boys with a view of becoming non-commissioned officers, regimental clerks, &c.; the girls to be made industrious servants, and fitting wives for men in a rank rather superior to that from which they themselves have sprung. The clergy take great delight in the instruction of the youthful members of their respective flocks, and they form the most numerous and the most interesting candidates for confirmation at the visits of the Bishop of Calcutta to the distant scenes of

his vast diocese. European ladies gladly take the females into service at an early age, and if they do not retain their situations long, it is because they are eagerly sought in marriage by their fathers' comrades, or by shopkeepers who chance to be located in their vicinity. The daughters of dragoon soldiers sometimes aspire to be belles; they copy the fashions brought out by new arrivals of a higher class, and do great execution at the balls, which upon grand occasions are given by the *élite* of the non-commissioned officers of the corps.

The wives of soldiers in India are secured from all those laborious toils and continual hardships to which they must submit in countries where the pay of their husbands is inadequate to their support. If sober and industrious, they may easily accumulate a little hoard for the comfort of their declining years. Acquaintance with any useful art, dress-making, feather-cleaning, lace-mending, washing silk stockings, or the like, may be converted into very lucrative employments; and the enormous wages demanded by European women, when they go into service as ladies'-maids, or wet nurses (from fifty to a hundred rupees per month), shews how indifferent they are to the means of acquiring money by personal exertion. Few officers' wives attached

to King's corps can afford to have a white female attendant; and the unaccustomed luxuries which these women enjoy, when domesticated in wealthy families, unfortunately, in too many instances, are apt to render them so lazy, insolent, and overbearing, as to be perfectly intolerable; and consequently it is not often that they are to be found out of the barracks.

Soldiers are not in England very scrupulous in the choice of their wives, and amid the numbers who come out to India, a very small proportion remain uncorrupted by bad example and the deteriorating influence of campaigns and long voyages. It is not absolutely necessary that they should undertake any thing beyond the care of their own family, and many prefer idleness to the slightest exertion. They and their children have regular rations served out for their daily food; while the regiment is upon a march, they are provided with suitable conveyances; during the hot winds, their quarters are supplied with *tatties;* and in passing along the lines *punkahs* may be seen swinging in the serjeants' barrack-rooms, and curious scenes are displayed to view through the open doors. Some fat and unshapeable lady, attired in a loose white gown, indulging in a siesta

in an elbow-chair, with a native attendant, ragged and in wretched case, who, fan in hand, agitates the air around her.

To those Anglo-Indians who cherish vivid recollections of home, and who delight in all things which recall their native country to their mind, it is exceedingly gratifying to be stationed in the vicinity of a King's regiment or a European corps in the service of the Company. After a long absence from England, and long association with persons of education, the homely provincial accents of some untaught soldier come in music on the ear, bringing with them a rush of painfully-pleasing emotions; recalling past scenes and past days, "awakening thoughts which long have slept," restoring youth, hope, health, and happiness, for a brief delightful period. Experience alone can tell how sad, and yet how dear, are the first meetings with country people of an inferior class in the jungles of India. A detachment of artillery, passing through a small out-post, whose European inhabitants did not exceed a dozen persons, occasioned a burst of anguish, which revealed to a pining exile the full extent of that home-sickness which had preyed in secret on her mind. Returning from an evening walk, a soldier's wife

crossed the path, and at first, rejoicing to meet a countrywoman, the lady eagerly stepped forward and accosted her; but no sooner did the familiar sounds of by-gone days strike upon her heart, than she burst into a flood of tears. Aware that the person who had caused this violent emotion would be quite unconscious of the effect which her homely speech had produced, she stifled her feelings, and, inviting the poor woman to come to the bungalow, hastened onward to order out the contents of the larder to form a little feast for her comrades in the camp; but she dared not trust herself beyond a few simple questions, and, unwilling to make a display of sensibility which might be misconstrued, and could not be understood, she did not indulge in the pensive gratification which a protracted interview would have afforded. When accustomed to see and converse with the lower order of Europeans, the keenness of the emotions produced by the reminiscences which they call up subsides, and the feelings they create are wholly of a pleasurable nature. The evening drive is rendered doubly gratifying by the groups of healthy-looking, tidily-dressed English children, at play in front of their quarters, or bending their way in the train of their parents along the road, upon a Sunday evening, to

the church, whose tinkling bell charms the ear as in days of old, when the peal from a village spire filled the heart to overflowing with delightful sensations.

Though destitute of the rich red roses, which bloom so freshly on the cheeks of youthful cottagers in England, the sickliness and delicacy, so strikingly apparent in the petted and carefully-attended offspring of the higher order, are rarely the characteristic of soldiers' children, who seem to preserve their strength and vigour in a climate considered to be exceedingly detrimental to the juvenile classes of Europeans. The mortality amongst the infants of this grade is not so great as might be expected: where their mothers have been unable to suckle them, and where the expense of a native nurse could not be incurred, a goat has performed the maternal office with infinite success, the little creatures thriving under the nourishment afforded by this humble animal; nor is it so usual to droop and pine away at the period in which change of climate is so earnestly recommended to the children of the rich; numbers of fine young men and women grow up to maturity without having tasted a colder air than that which blows in Hindostan.

The station-duties are performed at Ghazeepore by two or three companies of a native regiment, detached from Benares, sepoys standing sentinel at the hospital, store-houses, and at all places where the heat is considered to be injurious to European constitutions. There are a few staff-appointments held by officers of the Company's service, and the society receives a very agreeable addition from the families of several indigo-planters residing in the neighbourhood.

It is always a fortunate circumstance when the higher class of Anglo-Indian cultivators are settled in the vicinity of an European cantonment, since there are no set of persons who exercise more boundless hospitality, or from whom travellers receive more cordial kindness. Those with whom it would not be desirable to associate form a very small portion. The greater number of the country-born, or Eurasians, many of whom shew complexions still darker than that of the natives, are, generally speaking, intelligent, well-informed men, ever ready to contribute to any proposed amusement, and opening their doors readily at all times for the reception of guests; while those Europeans who have embarked in indigo speculations are usually of a very high order of intellect.

Although no rank is recognized in India, excepting that which is held by the civil and military servants of the Company, much to the credit of the society, there are no invidious distinctions made between the persons who compose it. Individuals who are gifted with pleasing manners and accomplishments will always receive the respect and attention due to their merits; little or no regard is paid to colour or to circumstances, where there are personal claims to the notice of those more highly endowed with the gifts of birth and fortune. Fine houses, fine equipages, and fine entertainments, though they may render individuals popular who have little else to recommend them, are not, as in England, essentially requisite to obtain a passport into good society. It is sufficient that the party shall have the *entrè* of government-house, the grand test of gentility in India; but even ineligibility in this particular does not, amid liberal-minded people, form an insurmountable barrier; many families, both in the Mofussil and in Calcutta, being received in society, whose occupation and calling must exclude them from the vice-regal court.

The India Company have a stud for the breed of horses in the vicinity of Ghazeepore, under the

superintendence of European officers peculiarly qualified for the appointment. The cattle which they turn out, though inferior in beauty to English and Arab chargers, are extremely useful, particularly for harness; a stud-bred horse with a good pedigree is a valuable animal, and always obtains a fair price, though considerably lower than that which would be demanded for a horse of equal merit in England. The common country breed, though it is said that they possess more blood than any other horses in the world, are so unseemly in their appearance and so unconquerably vicious in their habits, that they are rarely used, except upon some great emergence, by European officers. There are, however, some very handsome animals brought from distant parts of India, and others, especially those from Cutch, which are more curious than beautiful, but which prove hard-working useful roadsters, better fitted for the climate than those of English parentage, which are very soon knocked up, and are consequently taken the utmost care of.

From Calcutta to Barrackpore, a distance of sixteen miles, carriage-horses are always changed midway; and as none are kept for posting, a pair must be sent on the day before. Medical men, or

those who spend a good deal of their time in visiting, cannot take out the same horses in the evening which they have used in the morning; and it is one of the objections to Cawnpore, that officers who have only one buggy-horse, are unable to take their wives to the course in the evening, because it has been driven a long distance during the day to some court-martial or committee sitting at the extremity of the cantonments, which straggle along a space of five miles in length. Notwithstanding the care and attention paid to horses in India, the luxury of a stable is often of necessity denied them. When out in the field, or during long marches, they are picqueted under trees, the only covering which they or their *syces* have to protect them from the inclemency of the weather being a blanket; unless the grooms are liberally supplied with horse-cloths, they are too apt to make themselves comfortable at the expense of their charge; and it is therefore the best economy to provide sufficient clothing for man and horse.

An Indian *syce* is generally exceedingly attached to the animal under his care; it is no uncommon circumstance for gentlemen travelling by a different route to entrust their most valuable chargers to the sole guardianship of their grooms, who proceed

alone, though jungley districts, seldom if ever mounting the animals, which are led by their conductors, and which arrive at the place of their destination, at the end of two or three months, according to the distance, in excellent condition. Sometimes the *syce* is taken ill upon the road, in which event he will drag himself with difficulty to the next European station, and deliver up the horse to the care of some English gentleman, who, if the poor man's case should be desperate, will hire a new groom, and send him on with his charge, well assured that he will perform the duties of the service with fidelity and despatch. Instances of horses being lost or injured upon long journies of this nature, if known, are so exceedingly rare, that they cannot be adduced in prejudice of the national character, which, in the faithful discharge of the trust reposed in the humblest individuals, is unrivalled. Sepoys despatched upon treasure-parties, if surprised and outnumbered by bands of armed robbers, will make a desperate though hopeless resistance, and suffer themselves to be cut to pieces to a man rather than desert their posts, although retreat under the circumstances could not be considered dishonourable.

There is scarcely a servant in any establishment

who could not, if he pleased, make himself master of what would be wealth to him; for there are very few things which are not left open and at the mercy of the domestics, who have many facilities for escape beyond the reach of justice: but it is seldom that the poorest and lowest abuse their employer's confidence; nothing but ill-treatment, and, in many cases, not even that, will induce a servant to rob his master; frequently the whole household will abscond in the night, but they do not often carry any thing away with them, though there may be arrears of wages due, which they dare not return to claim. Yet, notwithstanding facts of this nature, which are notorious, and the unlimited confidence which the greater number of Europeans repose in their servants, no set of persons are more calumniated or reviled. There are certain perquisites to which they think themselves entitled, and which, if they are not very sharply looked after, they will appropriate; but, excepting where great carelessness and extravagance on the part of the heads of houses encourage similar waste in their inferiors, their peculations are very trifling, and by no means deserve to be designated by the opprobrious terms which people, unaccustomed to the tricks and frauds practised by European

domestics, are wont to use in descanting upon the knaveries of those of India. Were the same power to be placed in the humble classes of England, it would be much more frequently abused; but persons who have come out young and inexperienced to India, and who, in too many instances, entertain a prejudice against the colour of those with whom they are surrounded, are apt to fancy excellencies and perfections in servants at home, which only exist in their own imaginations: a truth of which, upon their return to Europe, they are soon painfully convinced.

Extraordinary examples of honesty are of perpetual occurrence in India; large sums of money, accidentally left upon tables, have been carefully secured by the first servant who espied them, and produced without any ostentation, as a matter of course, at the owner's return. The sirdar-bearer has usually the care of his master's purse, and when these men are judiciously selected, they may be entrusted with untold gold. The poorest class of labourers, *coolies*, are often employed to convey a box or parcel, containing valuable property, from Calcutta to the Upper Provinces, receiving an advance of pay at the period of their setting out, as they have no means of maintaining themselves

upon the road; fifteen or twenty rupees, if the journey be a long one, are often given for this purpose, and always without the slightest danger of the sum being misapplied. Nothing could be more easy than the appropriation of box and money to the use of the person who carries his load over many weary miles for scanty pay, and who, by diverging into a neighbouring district, might defy the pursuit of justice; but such things never occur; the only danger to be apprehended is the murder of the *cooly* by those prowling bands of robbers by profession which infest every part of Hindostan.

Ghazeepore is notorious for its thieves, many of whom pursue their vocation under a religious character, and in the garb of *gosseins* (devout beggars) inveigle their victims to their pagodas, where they assassinate them at leisure. Dacoits of a less atrocious description abound, and no travellers can escape their depredations, unless they consent to entertain one or two *chokeydars* during their halt, a set of gentry who act a double part, and are thieves when they are not watchmen. The vigilance and zeal of these guardians of the night are manifested by loud and incessant cries of *khaubba daar!* 'Take care!' When they do not

sleep themselves, they seem determined not to allow any persons to close their eyes who happen to be within hearing. Every quarter-of-an-hour the warning is repeated, with a strength of lungs which effectually precludes the hope that the Stentorian voice may fail, and quiet be restored.

The native city of Ghazeepore is better built and better kept than many other places of more importance. The bazaars are neat, well-supplied, and famous for their tailors, whose excellent workmanship is celebrated in the adjacent districts. A very considerable number of the inhabitants are Moosulmans, though the neighbouring population is chiefly Hindoo; their mosques are numerous and handsome, and their former grandeur is evinced by a superb palace built by the Nawāb Cossim Ali Khan, which occupies a considerable extent of ground overlooking the Ganges. This noble building is now in a melancholy state of dilapidation, neglected by the government, who have turned it into a custom-house, and have converted many of its suites of apartments into warehouses, and the residences of police *peons* belonging to the guard. Though thus rendered useful, it is not thought worthy of repair; its splendid banqueting-hall and cool verandahs, replete with architectural

beauty, abutting into the river, are deserted and left to the swift devastations of the climate. In a very short period, the whole of this magnificent fabric will become a heap of ruins, and then some mean and tasteless edifice will be erected in its place. The great dislike which Europeans entertain to a residence within the precincts of a native city has probably prevented the civilians attached to Ghazeepore from selecting this palace for their abode. It might, however, be rendered subservient to some public purpose, and could be put into repair at a small expense by men zealously desirous to preserve so interesting a relic, as the workmen would be furnished from the neighbouring prison.

The place of confinement for felons of all descriptions at Ghazeepore is large, strong, airy, and commodious, and usually crowded with delinquents of all castes and denominations: refractory Mosulmans incarcerated for various offences, and fanatical Hindoos, whose crimes are in most instances connected with their religion. Not content with starving themselves to death, in order to revenge themselves upon their adversaries in another world, they are sometimes known to murder a member of their own family, in the belief that the blood of the victim

will rest upon the heads of their adversaries. A memorable illustration of this notion occurred at Ghazeepore, where an old man, who conceived that he had a right to a piece of land which had been adjudged to his neighbour, brought his wife to the spot, an elderly personage, who could be easily spared, and forcing her, with the assistance of his friends and relations, into a hut made of straw, set it on fire, and burned her to death, in the expectation that the soil would be accursed and refuse to yield its fruits to the enemy who had triumphed over him.

The punishment of death is not often adjudged by the criminal courts to the natives of India. The law by which they are tried renders it very difficult to prove murders, however openly committed; and the usual sentence is hard labour upon the roads during a certain number of years, or for life, according to the enormity of the crime. The convicts work in irons, and are sometimes employed in weeding the paths round the houses of people of distinction.

A stranger seated in a drawing-room of an officer of very high rank was much amazed by the "*qui hi? punkah tannah!*" ('who waits? pull the *punkah*,') being answered by a felon, fettered and

manacled, who, with the utmost coolness squatted down upon the floor, applied himself to the rope, and pulled away vigorously, his chains clanking in harmony all the time. Such an exhibition did not seem to strike the family as any thing extraordinary; they appeared to think that, provided the *punkah* was set in motion, the character and condition of the operator were of very little consequence: a proof amongst many others of the utter disregard of consistency manifested in an Anglo-Indian establishment.

In visiting persons of consequence in the Mofussil, travellers in their *griffinage* are exceedingly astonished by the appearance of the verandahs leading to apartments furnished with costliness and taste, they being generally made to resemble old clothes'-shops, or pawnbrokers'-stalls; servants and sepoys of the guard are usually permitted to hang up their garments upon the pillars and bamboos, and to spread their beds under the awning. More attention is paid to appearances in Calcutta; but the basement-story of many of the houses frequently exhibits symptoms of carelessness and neglect; choked up with unseemly articles, which native servants never deem to be out of place in the most conspicuous situations.

The houses of the civilians attached to Ghazeepore are spacious and well-built, surrounded by good gardens, and occupying picturesque situations, amid tame but luxuriant scenery; where the green lanes, flowering hedge-rows, and receding glades bring the most cultivated portions of England to mind. The bungalows of the military residents are frightful; the huge thatched roofs, common to such edifices, being exchanged for still more ugly tiles of glaring red. They are fortunately well sheltered and somewhat concealed by intervening trees, and the interiors are commodious though overrun with rats and mice, which few of the European residents are at the trouble to destroy, notwithstanding the dirt they engender and the havoc which they commit in wardrobes, larders, and furniture. It is not difficult to exterminate this sort of vermin; but Indian servants, if not enjoined to keep the houses clean, will allow them to swarm in every apartment, and habit reconciles many persons to the intrusion. Those who entertain a disgust to such unclean animals are most cruelly annoyed by the multitudes which approach them whenever they pay their visits to friends.

The races of Ghazeepore are some of the best in India, and attract sporting characters from all the

adjacent provinces; the horses are superior to those started for mere amusement by less ambitious members of the turf at other stations, and are frequently the subject of heavy bets. Commodious stables have been erected, which are occupied by the favourites, and the result of each meeting excites very general interest all over the country. The annual fair at Hadjeepore, held at an inconsiderable distance, and the occasional visits of families from Mirzapore, Chunar, Buxar, Sultanpore, and Benares, places situated within an easy journey, render Ghazeepore a very lively residence. The military cantonments are honoured by retaining the mortal remains of a soldier, eminent for the conquest of some of the fairest portions of the Honourable Company's territories, the great Cornwallis, who, after his glorious exploits upon the other side of India, died during a journey from the Upper Provinces, and is buried near the parade-ground of Ghazeepore. The mausoleum, which has been raised over his dust, is little worthy of the magnificent spirit which sleeps beneath; and shews to great disadvantage after a visit to the Moosulman tombs so profusely scattered over the neighbouring plains. The architects disdained to take a hint from the chaste and beautiful specimens

of monumental remains which the country affords, and have erected a nondescript building, at a great expense, after a model of the far-famed sybil's temple; but deformed by mean pillars and a cumbrous attic story disproportioned to its support. It is built of excellent materials, free-stone, which promises great durability; and the dome, which, though it has been compared to the cover of a pepper-pot, is the best part of it, makes a good appearance from the river, and will look still better when shadowed by the trees which are planted in the back-ground. The mausoleum forms a point of attraction to the station; the military band, always an appendage to a King's regiment, plays near it of an evening, and the whole population of the different lines come forth in carriages, on horseback, or on foot, to enjoy the fresh cool breezes and the society of their acquaintance. A few European shopkeepers are settled at Ghazeepore, which is well supplied with foreign and native products; the sugar-cane is extensively cultivated in the district, but its manufacture is not so celebrated as at Kalpee on the Jumna, where the natives produce immense quantities of the finest descriptions. The best kind of sugar in India is crystallized, and sold in the shape of baskets, some-

what resembling those made of alum, which are constructed by ingenious young ladies in England. These have a pretty appearance when placed upon a tray, and always form a portion of the presents composed of dried fruits and sweetmeats.

CHAPTER III.

GOVERNMENT-HOUSE, CALCUTTA.

Bishop Heber, in speaking of the vice-regal palace of Calcutta, says, that it has narrowly missed being a noble structure; persons of less refined, or as some would call it less fastidious taste, do not concur in this censure, or admit that the architectural blunders, of which the critic complains, have had an injurious effect upon the appearance of the building. It is altogether, whatever may be the fault of its details, a splendid pile; and, standing isolated on the Calcutta side of the large open plain, which forms so magnificent a quadrangle opposite Chowringee, it is seen to the greatest advantage from every point, being sufficiently connected with the city to shew that it belongs to it, yet unencumbered and not shut out by any of the adjacent buildings. It consists of two semicircular galleries, placed back to back, uniting in the centre in a large hall, and connecting four splendid suites of apartments. "Its columns, how-

ever," observes the Bishop, "are in a paltry style; and instead of having, as it might have had, two noble stories and a basement, it has three stories, all too low, and is too much pierced with windows on every side."

Somewhat of effect was probably sacrificed to convenience and the accommodation necessary for the establishment of the Governor-general; but the great objection to it as an Asiatic residence, which does not appear to have struck the elegant and accurate commentator, is the want of colonnades and porticos. The principal entrances are approached by noble flights of steps; but these, being without shelter, are never used except upon state occasions, when a native durbar is held, and the nobles of Hindostan come in all their barbaric pomp to pay their respects at the vice-regal court; a circumstance of rare occurrence in the present day. The carriages of the European visitants drive under these steps, and the company enter through the lower regions.

The effect upon a stranger, who has not been previously made acquainted with the cause of the arrangement, is very singular. It is scarcely possible for a lively imagination to escape the notion that, instead of being the guest of a palace, he is

on the point of being conducted to some hideous dungeon as a prisoner of state. The hall which opens upon the dark cloister formed by the arch of the steps above, is large, low, and dimly lighted, completely realizing the *beau ideal* of the interior of the Inquisition. A good deal of rubbish of various kinds, piled confusedly and put out of the way behind rows of pillars, traversing the length of the hall, favours the supposition that it is a place of punishment; for in their shapeless obscurity, these fire-engines, or printing-presses, or whatever they may be, have very much the appearance of instruments of torture.

Upon the floor, the spectator, who has imbibed, the apprehension that he has been entrapped into some pandemonium of horror, may see the dead bodies of the victims to a tyrannical government thickly strewed around:—human forms apparently wrapped in winding-sheets, and stretched out without sense or motion upon the bare pavement, add to the ghastly effect of the scene. These are the palanquin-bearers, who, wrapped up from head to foot in long coarse cloths, are enjoying the sweets of repose, little dreaming of the appalling spectacle they present to unaccustomed eyes. Many dusky figures move about with noiseless tread; and

were it not for one redeeming circumstance, the whole panorama would be calculated to inspire horror and alarm. In the midst of these dreary catacombs, gay parties of visitors, ladies in ball-dresses, and gentlemen in full uniform, are passing along, not in the least discomposed by appearances so familar to them, even when there is the additional *agrémen* of a fog, which in the cold season usually casts a mystic veil over these subterraneous apartments.

Emerging from the damp, darkness, and corpse-like figures of the sleepers, an illuminated vestibule leads to a staircase, handsome in itself, but not exactly correspondent with the size of the building, and the halls of state to which it is the approach. It is not until the visitant has gained the altitude of the hall, that the eye is greeted by any portion of the pomp and grandeur associated with our ideas of a court. Guards are now stationed at intervals; those which were formerly attached to the Governor-general were a splendid and picturesque set of men, clad in strange and striking costume; warlike as became a military power, and particularly ornamental as the appendages of state. The spirit of retrenchment, which has lately descended to petty savings, unworthy of the masters of so magnificent a terri-

tory, has removed and abolished this appropriate guard of honour; and the natives, already astonished and disappointed by the contrast afforded by the simplicity and plainness of their European rulers, with the pomp and pageantry of oriental courts, viewed this last innovation with disapprobation and regret. As the visitor ascends, the turbaned domestics of the household become more numerous; long corridors, leading to the wings, matted and lighted, present noble ideas of the extent and grandeur of the building; and at every landing-place the necessary pause for breath is spent in admiration of the contrivance of the architect to ensure a circulation of air, which comes so freely through the connecting galleries.

The suites of apartments devoted to large evening-parties occupy the third story. The ball-room, or throne-room, as it is called, is approached through a splendid antechamber; both are floored with dark polished wood, and supported by Ionic pillars, leaving a wide space in the centre, with an aisle on either side; handsome sofas of blue satin damask are placed between the pillars, and floods of light are shed through the whole range from a profusion of cut-glass chandeliers and lustres. Formerly, the ceilings were painted, but the little reverence

shewn by the white ants to works of art, obliged them to be removed, and gilt mouldings are now the only ornaments. The throne, never particularly superb, is now getting shabby; a canopy of crimson damask, surmounted by a crown, and supported upon gilt pillars, is raised over a seat of crimson and gold; in front, there is a row of gilded chairs, and it is the etiquette for the viceroy and the vice-queen, upon occasions of state, to stand before the throne to receive the presentations. There is, however, nothing like a drawing-room held at this court; no lord chamberlain, or noblemen in waiting, or any functionaries corresponding with these personages, except the aides-de-camp, who are seldom very efficient, being more intent upon amusing themselves than anxious to do the honours to the company. In these degenerate days, so little state is kept up, that, after the first half-hour, the representatives of sovereignty quit their dignified post, and mingle with the assembled crowd.

There is no court-dress, or scarcely anything to distinguish the public nights at Government-house from a private party. Excepting that until lately, no gentleman was permitted to appear in a white jacket. An attempt was made by Lady Hastings to establish a more rigid system of etiquette; she

had her chamberlain, and her train was held up by pages. An intimation was given to the ladies that it was expected they would appear in court plumes, and many were prevented from attending in consequence of the dearth of ostrich feathers, the whole of the supply being speedily bought up; and as it was not considered allowable to substitute native products, there was no alternative but to remain at home. The extreme horror which European ladies entertained of appearing to imitate the natives, banished gold and silver from their robes: not contented with the difference in the fashion of their garments, they refused to wear any articles of Indian manufacture, careless of the mean effect produced by this fastidiousness. Few had been accustomed to European courts; and having once established rules and regulations of their own, they stoutly resisted all attempts at alteration and innovation, every arrival being obliged to submit to the customs of the colony. The great influx of strangers at Calcutta has effected some change in the system; visitors are not now so much under the control of the leading people; they appear in whatever may be the fashion in England; and instead of, as heretofore, being obliged to rip off the silver trimmings from their dresses, or discard them

altogether, to avoid the appellation of *nautch girls*, they are allowed to sparkle and glitter without provoking many invidious remarks.

Where shall I walk at Government-house? formed an interrogatory to which, a few years ago, the suitors who could not give a satisfactory answer had little chance of success. The enquiry now is seldom made; the reply having lost much of its importance. At the state-dinners, ladies sit according to their rank, and they are as nearly paired with male attendants of equal pretensions as circumstances will admit; but at balls and suppers, after the Governor-general has led the wife of the greatest personage to table, the rest of the party follow in an indiscriminate manner. It is not, however, very long since the struggle for precedence was carried on with a spirit and perseverance worthy of colonial warfare; two or three questions were sent home for final adjustment, and the wives of civilians, high in office, were much mortified to find that they were not entitled to take place of the daughters of English peers, even though they should have married ensigns. It was decided that Lady Mary or the Honourable Mrs., had a right to precedence, whatever their husbands' military rank might be; and still worse, that the younger

brothers of noble families could exalt their wives above the other ladies, though in their military or civil capacity they themselves must give place to their superiors in office. The humble titles assumed by the servants of the Honourable Company of Merchants trading to the East-Indies, of senior and junior merchants, factors, and writers, were much at variance with their notions concerning their dignity, and the precedence they considered themselves to be entitled to take of the ancient nobility of England, and general officers holding the King's or the Company's commissions; but the narrow notions engendered by the pride of office, are not so prevalent as heretofore; the magnates of the colony are not quite so important in their own eyes, or in the estimation of those beneath them, and too much ridicule is now attached to squabbles about a seat at table, to render the discussion of such topics very general.

Government-house is the only place in which the guests are not allowed to introduce their own attendants; the servants of the establishment are numerous, and perfectly equal to the duties required. They are handsomely clothed in livery according to the Hindoostanee fashion; wearing in the hot weather, white muslin vests and trowsers,

with *cummerbunds* or sashes, twisted with scarlet or some other colour, and the crest in silver in their turbans. In the cold weather, the vest is of cloth of the livery colour. They are all fine-looking men, and the uniformity of their appearance gives them a great advantage over the promiscuous multitude usually in attendance at large parties; though the absence of the personal domestic is considered by many a heavy grievance, and more especially by those who are deprived by the existing regulations of the indulgence of the hookah.

There is no established rule respecting the entertainments at Government-house; no service of plate, or decorations for the table belonging to the establishment. The grandeur of the banquets depends entirely upon the taste and liberality of the person who holds the appointment of Governor-general for the time being; and it is whispered that there are not always a sufficient quantity of silver forks for all the guests, and that the side-tables are sometimes supplied with a manufacture of steel of no very tempting appearance. An ornamental supper, as far as the viands are concerned, is still a desideratum in Calcutta; Government-house being very little in advance of less distinguished mansions; and perhaps the only superiority it can

boast, consisting in such refinement as excludes large heavy joints, and substitutes a loin for a saddle of mutton. The small, delicate, gem-like, tempting dishes, which glitter on a supper-table in London, have no counterparts in the City of Palaces; every thing there is solid, substantial, and undisguised, a state of things entirely attributable to the prejudices of European society, since the genius of cookery possessed by the natives only requires to be drawn into action. A very small quantity of instruction would suffice to render them unrivalled in every confectionary and culinary art; and there cannot be the slightest reason for the inelegance which characterizes a Calcutta banquet, except the real or affected horror which is entertained of black cooks.

The parties at Government-house, for the reasons before assigned, do not derive the brilliancy which might be expected from the dresses of the ladies; the effect, at least, when compared to that of European ball-rooms, is disappointing; there is a want of freshness and lustre about the attire, which is very striking to a stranger's eye; nor can there be so much fancy and variety exhibited in the form and ornaments, in a place where fashions and milliners are few, as in those more favoured

capitals, where the success of multitudes of artists and tradespeople depends upon the taste and invention they display. Of course, there are numerous exceptions—many individual toilettes which may be pronounced perfect; but these are lost or obscured in the cloudiness which prevails, and always will prevail, so long as the female residents of India prefer the faded manufactures of Europe to the gorgeous fabrics of oriental looms. At fancy-balls, where the products of the country are rendered available, the difference of the effect is astonishing; instead of being confined within the narrow limits prescribed by the last bulletins from London or Paris, fancy and talent have free scope; and in no assemblage of the kind could more magnificent groups be found than those which have made their appearance at Government-house. Military uniforms, in some degree, make up for the sombreness of female attire upon more ordinary occasions; and the effect of a well-filled ball-room is much heightened when the company is not exclusively composed of Europeans. The dress of the Armenian ladies is picturesque and striking, though the peculiarity is chiefly confined to the head; they wear a glittering tiara of a very singular and classic form across the forehead, with a

veil suspended from the top, and hanging down in graceful folds on either side. It is not, however, very often that these ladies are seen in the public assemblies of Calcutta, in which, until very lately, it has not been thought either advisable or agreeable to encourage a promiscuous assemblage of different classes and communities. Without wishing to impugn the motives upon which the former rulers of India have acted, it is impossible not to admit that a more liberal system is better suited to the present time. Doubtless the innovations which have taken and are still taking place, will be very unpalatable to those who remember the extraordinary dignity attached to official situations and white faces in former days; but those who entertain more enlarged views, will rejoice that some of the barriers which have divided persons of different persuasions and different complexions from each other, have been broken down, and are disappearing. Bishop Heber, whose kindness of heart and liberality of mind have justly endeared him to the Indian world, was the first to shew an example to the intolerant and exclusive patricians of Calcutta, by opening his doors to respectable persons of all sects and countries. At his house, Christians of the Roman Catholic, Greek, and Pro-

testant churches met, together with Hindoos, Moslems, Jews, and Parsees: he recommended the religion which he preached by the practice of the widest philanthropy; and, had he been spared, the popularity of his manners, and the well-known benevolence of his disposition, would have done much towards the removal of prejudices, which have for so long a period prevented a free and social communication between Europeans and Asiatics.

A few native gentlemen, who have either adopted English customs, or are so well acquainted with them as not to be guilty of any misapprehension or mistake, have for many years mingled freely in the fashionable circles of Calcutta, making their appearance at private parties, and joining in the subscriptions for public amusements; they were distinguished in large assemblies for the elegance of their costume, and the splendour of their diamonds; and persons who did not enter into the narrow notions which were but too prevalent, regretted that a much larger proportion of the same class should not have been encouraged to follow their example. Latterly, invitations to Government-house have been very widely extended amongst the natives of rank; and the introduction of men, ignorant of the rules and regulations of European society has given

offence, and occasioned disgust to those who do not consider the measure to be expedient, or who refuse to make allowance for early notions and rooted opinions, which nothing but more intimate association can dissipate. Asiatics, at present, are not aware of the restrictions imposed in Europe by etiquette and good-breeding on the intercourse between ladies and gentlemen; they see them converse together, dance together, and walk arm in arm together, and when admitted to the same degree of familiarity, they are apt to make very ridiculous trespasses. Without the slightest intentional rudeness, a native gave great offence by seating himself on the arm of a lady's chair; and not knowing the precise limits which propriety has marked out, they do not always offer the deferential respect which women expect, and which, rather inconsiderately, they exact more strictly from foreigners than from their own countrymen, who, being better acquainted with the rules and observances, are less excusable in their breach or omission. At this day, the degree of decorum necessary to be adopted in the presence of French ladies, is so little understood by John Bull, that he is continually offering insult and annoyance, by exceeding a latitude in conversation which he has erroneously supposed to have no bounds. It

is thus that Asiatics offend, and constant intercourse can alone render them acquainted with the terms upon which gentlemen mix in respectable female society. It is certainly not very agreeable to be obliged to give the lesson; but the consequences are too important to be neglected, especially at a period in which there are such strong manifestations of the abandonment of prejudices hitherto supposed to be insurmountable.

In the native papers, published in Calcutta, the advantages and disadvantages of extending the indulgences enjoyed by European women to Asiatics are freely discussed; there seems to be no question about the expediency of improving the mind, and giving a more liberal education than has heretofore been considered necessary; emancipation must follow as a matter of course. Some of the writers have taken upon themselves the task of vindicating the privileges enjoyed by the Asiatic women, and have attempted to shew that, in point of fact, they are not under any restrictions at all; but such persons have no chance against the advocates for improvement: the reasoning on both sides is not a little curious, bearing strong evidence of the novelty of the subject, and the crude ideas it has engendered.

The custom of polygamy, appears to be the grand difficulty to the approximation to European manners, which upon many accounts would be so desirable; but it is astonishing how very little is known concerning the domestic establishment of either Moslem or Hindoo.

A modern Persian writer* has said that, from his own experience in the matter, it is easier to live with two tigresses than two wives; and in India, many more persons than is usually supposed, either through individual attachment, or for the sake of peace and quietness, content themselves with one. There is always so great a distinction between the first wife, and those who submit to take an inferior rank, that no persons of wealth or family would permit their daughters to contract a marriage with a man who has already placed a lady at the head of his establishment; and therefore it would appear that, in reality, there is rather a plurality of mistresses than of wives; and that, though the custom of the country sanctions their living together, the first, or, as she is sometimes termed, the *equal* wife, is the only person of great respectability or consequence, the other women being either in a very subordinate capa-

* Abu Taleb Khan.

city, or degraded to the condition of household servants.

Few things are more surprising to native gentlemen than the display of female talent in arts or acquirements which have been considered the exclusive possession of men. Accomplishments, particularly those of music and dancing, are not held in any respect; but their encomiums upon female artists and authors, shew that they entertain great reverence for such manifestations of intellectual superiority. A Mahratta General, at a ball, asked to be introduced to the lady who had written a book; and in looking at miniatures from a female pencil, it was frequently remarked that the English women exceeded the men in talent.

Want of urbanity, a too common trait in the English character, will, it is to be feared, retard the good understanding which ought to exist between natives of rank and the servants of their foreign rulers; but there can be little doubt that our retaining the possession of India will mainly depend upon the conciliation of a class of persons, whom it appears to have been hitherto the policy to depress and neglect, if not to insult. Natives of rank, property, and influence, must speedily acquire a knowledge of their position and of their

strength; and unless they should obtain the respect, consideration, and importance, which seem so justly their due, it can scarcely be expected that they will continue to give their support to a government, whose servants are resolutely opposed to their interests. Hitherto there has been little to tempt them into private society; with very few exceptions, Anglo-Indian residents have been indisposed to impart or to receive information from natives; they have taken little pains to instruct them upon the subject of modes and manners which must have struck them as being odd and unaccountable, or to inspire them with respect by the display of superior mental powers. But while ball-rooms have been deserted, the theatre has always proved an attraction. Parties of Hindostanee gentlemen, beautifully clad in white muslin, and, should the weather be cold, enveloped in Cashmeres, which would make the heart of a Parisian lady swell with envy, take their places in the boxes of the Chowringee theatre, sitting in the first row, and as near the stage as possible. They prefer tragedy to comedy; and when the treasury is very low, and a full attendance of some consequence, the manager, consulting rather the interests of the house than the talents of the actors, announces the representation

of *Macbeth* or *Othello*, which is sure to crowd the benches with Asiatic spectators.

A spirit of enquiry is now awakened in the minds of the natives, which cannot fail to lead to very important results; their anxiety to render themselves acquainted with the means by which science has been enabled to produce such extraordinary effects, will establish the bond of union so much wanted between them and the European residents. At the formal visits, to which the intercourse has until now been too much restricted, the greater portion of gentlemen holding official situations, have found the mode of conversation, carried on according to eastern etiquette, too irksome for long endurance; and rather than submit to usages and customs which were new and disagreeable, they abridged all communication as much as possible, giving very little encouragement to the natives to persevere in the attempt to cultivate a better understanding. Where no interpreter is required, persons of equal rank, upon visits of ceremony, rarely converse with each other. Their observations are directed to the chief personages of their retinue, and the individual thus circuitously addressed, replies in the same manner. There is something very absurd in seeing, at some small

military post, an interview of this nature take place between the English commandant and a petty rajah in the neighbourhood. The latter makes his appearance with as large a *suwarree* as he can muster; his elephants, horses, state-palanquins, *hircarrahs*, *peons*, and matchlock-men, many in very ragged case, are drawn up in an imposing manner on the outside, and he enters, accompanied by the younger branches of his family, and hangers-on of a rather inferior description, who put themselves behind the chairs set for the great people. However averse the officer thus visited may be to ostentation and parade, his servants have his honour too much at heart to permit him to use his own discretion; they crowd into the antechambers, and verandahs, those at the head of the establishment take up a position which enables them to support their master's dignity by becoming the medium of communication; conversation is thus necessarily reduced to common-places, and, excepting when circumstances require an almost daily intercourse, Europeans are seldom or ever at the pains to place it upon a more friendly footing.

While we must regret that so long a period has been suffered to elapse, without cementing a closer bond of union between the Anglo-Indian and the

Asiatic community, it would be unfair not to make allowances for the peculiar position of the British residents in Hindostan. An Englishman always finds it very difficult to accommodate himself to foreign usages and customs; and as the greater number of civil and military servants were placed in very responsible situations, they might consider it advisable not to incur the suspicion of an interested partiality, by an intimate personal acquaintance with natives, whom in their official capacity they might be supposed to favour from some selfish motive. It must also be considered that, although we have now full and undisputed possession of the whole of the peninsula, the quiet settlement of the country under British rule has been effected within a limited period, and that in the difficult position in which Europeans were placed, it would have been impolitic to mix themselves up with persons, who in all probability would have taken advantage of confidence too rashly placed. It is highly honourable to the British character that, in spite of its want of urbanity, and the little personal affection which it creates, its uprightness and steadiness have secured the fidelity of immense multitudes bound to a foreign government by the equal distribution of justice and the

security of property. It is unfortunate that we cannot unite the more endearing qualities with the moral excellencies for which we are distinguished: but, as the aspect of affairs is altering in India, we shall do well to consult the signs of the times, and remedy those defects which we have found in our system before it be too late.

It is greatly to the credit of the natives of India that they are disliked and despised only by those who are either unacquainted with their language, or who have been very little in their society. From such men as Mr. Hastings, Sir John Malcolm, Colonel Tod, Sir Thomas Munro, Mr. Elphinstone, and indeed all who have had opportunities of becoming intimately acquainted with them, they have received justice; their faults and vices are those of their religion and their laws, but, notwithstanding almost innumerable circumstances adverse to the formation of moral character, they possess many endearing and redeeming virtues, and no people in the world are so quick at discerning merit, or so ready to acknowledge it.

The latest accounts from Calcutta state, that the present Governor-general has determined to break through "the unjust and aristocratical distinctions" which, as the writer terms it, "have for so long a

period *festered the feelings* * of those in the less elevated grades of Indian society," by extending the invitations to Government-house to persons who, previous to his appointment, had not been considered eligible to so high an honour. Whether this measure, which relates to the European portion of the community, will produce the good effect which the commentator of the *India Gazette* so fondly anticipates, is exceedingly questionable. He tells us that it will "strengthen the attachment to the government, and enable individuals in different stations of life to form intimacies engendered by merit." Few persons above the very lowest orders are desirous to destroy all the distinctions of rank; an unlimited *entré* into Government-house to Europeans of every description would not, we believe, be considered advisable, and wherever the line of demarcation shall be placed, there will be discontent. Those who are most anxious to gain admission for themselves, feel equally desirous to exclude the class immediately beneath them; and on inquiry it will be found that those shopkeepers, who complain of the prejudices which kept them out of the

* The study of grandiloquence cannot be pursued to more advantage than in the columns of a Colonial Newspaper.

best society, refuse to associate with trades which are not considered so genteel as their own. The reception-rooms at Government-house may be crowded by all sorts and conditions of men, but so far from engendering friendships between them, the only effect of such indiscriminate assemblages will be to bring the public parties into disrepute, and to render private society more rigid and exclusive than ever.*

There is already a tendency to divide and separate in the Anglo-Indian community of Calcutta;

* Cards of invitation to the balls and parties of Government-house have been lately sent to persons in the pilot service: very respectable men, no doubt, but from their habits, education, and manners, scarcely fitting guests for the circle of a court. It is said, that even the stewards of ships found entrance into these promiscuous assemblies, and that the company altogether made a strange appearance. Some of the gentlemen chose to appear in deshabille, wearing white calico jackets, and carrying white beaver hats under their arms; others were requested to withdraw in consequence of the unruliness of their demeanour; while those who were too well conducted to transgress the bounds of decorum, spent their time in a very uncomfortable state of restraint. On one of these guests being asked, how he was amused at the party? he replied, "Pretty well; five or six of us got together and sat down." This person brought his invitation with him to England in order to convince the incredulous.

several circles are now forming where one alone formerly embraced the whole of the resident gentry. In a less extensive population, every body of a certain rank became acquainted with each other, and visited without reference to superiority of income, or of the different degrees of honour attached to their individual occupations and pursuits; but as the number of residents have increased, they have been attracted to each other by similarity of circumstances. New arrivals have become too numerous to excite general observation and attention, and the hospitality which they experience is confined to those to whom they have been particularly recommended. Now that there is a choice of visitors, people are beginning to be fastidious, and to look with disdain upon parties which are not select; and in a short time Calcutta will resemble London in its exactions of certain passports and credentials for admission into the best society. When to visit at the Government-parties ceases to confer any distinction, the leading people of the presidency will only give their attendance when it cannot be avoided. Invidious differences will be made between private and public nights, and the feelings of those who are excluded will continue to fester, upon the discovery that little or nothing has

been gained by a relaxation of court etiquette. At no period has exclusion from Government-house, rendered the party ineligible to admission to private society in Calcutta, where the distinctions are certainly not more invidious to Europeans than those of any other city.

The position of Indo-Britons at Government-house is somewhat singular, and it perhaps would have been advisable to have extended invitations to respectable persons of that class. In this case, native prejudice has been more considered than the aristocratic feeling which has excluded retail dealers, who boast an unsullied descent from European parents. The natives look down, or at least have looked down, with great contempt upon a mixed breed, which, upon the maternal side must have sprung from the lowest or the least virtuous class of society; and Anglo-Indians, who chose to associate with the half-caste children of the soil, forfeited their claims to mix among their equals. To be seen in public with, or to be known to be intimate at the houses of Indo-Britons, was fatal to a new arrival in Calcutta; there was no possibility of emerging from the shade, or of making friends or connections in a higher sphere. The better classes of the Eurasians, as it is now the fashion

to call them, bore their exclusion with more equanimity than the European shopkeepers, though certainly their case was the harder of the two; many were merchants on a very extensive scale, whose occupation could not be objected to, the tint of their skin being the only thing against them. Latterly, however, a great stir has been made by this portion of the community, who, in the orations with which the Town Hall has rang, and the appeals issuing from the press, descant with more eloquence than judgment upon the wrongs of their country, sometimes arrogating to themselves the glory of their maternal ancestors, and at others claiming the rights of Englishmen, and demanding to be placed in official situations under a government which they represent to be little better than an usurpation.

For a very long period, no half-caste was admitted into Government-house; marriages with this class of the community were discouraged by banishment from society, and even by the forfeiture of office. Nevertheless, the charms of the dark-eyed beauties prevailed; a man of high rank contrived to introduce his wife; other married ladies were admitted, there being no longer any plea for their exclusion; but it was still a long time before excep-

tions were made in favour of illegitimate daughters. Several succeeding Governors-general positively refused to admit them; and it is not exactly known how their entrance was effected at last. These young ladies form the only individuals of their sex who enjoy greater privileges than are allowed to the masculine portion of the same class. Emancipation from the restrictions which oblige them to move in a very inferior grade of society, has been rigidly denied to the sons of Europeans by native women; their only employments leading to wealth have been wholly mercantile, and the greater number have been only qualified to fill the lower orders of clerkships. At the orphan schools, the sisters of families are taught to dance; but that accomplishment is not considered necessary in the education of the brothers, and the young ladies, conscious of their superior prospects, look down upon their male relatives with undisguised disdain. Nearly all the females aspire to marriages with Europeans, and are with great reluctance prevailed upon to unite themselves to persons of their own class. The men are less ambitious; they are afraid of being despised by their wives, or perhaps, in consequence of the greater difficulty of forming alliances amongst persons of a different complexion, are

content to match with those of their own condition.*

The city of Calcutta is indebted to the Marquess Wellesley for the erection of Government-house. Previous to the appointment of that nobleman to the viceroyship of India, there was nothing in the city worthy of the name, or at all superior to the residence in Fort William, intended for the retreat of the Governor-general in the event of the attack of the city by a hostile force. A great part of the furniture and ornamental decorations was purchased at the sale of General Claude Martine's effects at Lucknow; but they are little worthy of the edifice. There are a few good portraits in the council chamber, those of Lord Clive and Mr. Hastings being esteemed fine specimens of the art; altogether, however, the interior disappoints, falling far short of the expectations raised by the size and external grandeur of the building, and the power of the Government by which it has been erected. Its

* It cannot be too strongly impressed upon the reader's mind, that these exclusions originated in the prejudices of the natives, who, while professing their willingness to be governed by Europeans, absolutely refused to submit to persons springing from outcast females. Hence the impossibility of admitting half-castes into the Company's army.

pinnacles are the favourite resort of the *argeelah*, or butcher-bird, commonly called the adjutant. It is said that every one of these animals has its peculiar roosting-place, and, as they stand motionless on their perches, they are frequently mistaken at a little distance for stone appendages of the building.

Notwithstanding the exclusions which are described to be so "festering to the feelings," the walls of Government-house have witnessed an odd *mélange* of guests; many have strutted in great importance along its lighted saloons, whose pretensions to such an honour would have been considered more than doubtful in England.

The *entré* is extended to captains of free-traders, some of whom seem rather out of their element in fashionable parties; but the honours paid to merchants in the naval service are, in the present day, as nothing compared to the glories of their reception before the trade was open, and when they brought intelligence ardently looked-for, and supplies of still greater importance. Formerly, the commandant of an Indiaman was received in Calcutta with a royal salute; his colonial rank was equal to that of a post-captain in the Royal Navy, and he was not less of a bashaw in the state-apart-

ments of Government-house, than on the boards of his own quarter-deck. Skippers of chartered vessels trading to India were aspirants for seats in the direction; they made enormous fortunes by the sale of their cargoes; and a passage home in their floating hotels amounted to a sum, the interest of which would have maintained a moderate person in comfort for life. Old Indians are fond of reverting to these glorious days; when money was plenty and news scarce; when vessels were a year upon their voyage, and their freight, always insufficient to supply the demand, sold at the most extravagant prices; when people contrived to get in debt upon princely fortunes, and accustomed themselves to so lavish a profusion of money, that they found they could not return home unless they had the Bank of England at their command. It was in these days that the parties at Government-house were in their glory; when the visitants felt their importance, and were looked up to by the inferior orders of the community as kings and princes. Men high in office never appeared without their *chobdars*; and all the natives whom they met were obliged, according to the custom of the country, to alight from their vehicles, and remain standing until they had passed. It was necessary, in earlier times, for

the English rulers to imitate the state and grandeur of the native potentates in their neighbourhood, who insisted upon this mark of respectful homage, and to which Europeans resident at their courts were compelled, however reluctantly, to submit.

In a letter dated 1776, we see how deeply the indignity, thus sustained by an Englishman, rankled in his mind. Speaking of the death of Cossim Ally Khan, who had experienced great reverses, and expired in poverty without friends or followers, the writer, an officer in the Company's service, says: "In passing by his children the other day, I could not help recollecting the having once, at Patna, been obliged to dismount from my horse and wait a-foot till his retinue had passed me, before I was permitted to mount again, or to retire. I could have done the same by his children: but I bear no malice, *and besides he could not well have known it himself.*" At Delhi and Lucknow, the approach of the king is still announced by kettle-drums, which warn all other passengers to get out of the way; all the umbrellas are furled,—and the people who are unable to effect a retreat, are obliged to descend from their carriages and stand on foot, with folded hands, while the royal personage passes. The Resident alone is

permitted to keep his *chattah* over his head in the presence of the king of Oude, the rest of the Europeans being still obliged to endure the scorching rays of the sun unsheltered, while they have the honour to be in the monarch's company.

Such customs were only kept up by Europeans as long as they were positively necessary. The Governor-general now goes about Calcutta, not only without state, but in the humblest manner; the present viceroy, having, it is said, upon more than one occasion, asked a seat in a buggy of a stranger, who did not guess the rank of his companion until he was requested to drive to Government-house: like the most celebrated Caliph of Bagdad, he was fond of perambulating the city *incog.* Though, in former times, such conduct would have brought the government into contempt, the natives of Calcutta are now so much accustomed to the unostentatious mode of living pursued by the *Feringhees,* that they have lost a great part of the astonishment it formerly excited: still they are of opinion that England must be a very poor country, in which people live so miserably that they do not know how to assume the state to which they might aspire in India.

Every native, however, who comes to England,

expresses his surprise at the splendour which meets his gaze. The number and magnificence of the equipages particularly attract their notice. At one of the late drawing-rooms, two Suwars, who have made their way to the Court of Directors from the Upper Provinces, expressed their admiration in a very lively manner, of the carriages and horses which they saw assembled in St. James's Street. Several officers, who spoke their language, were amongst the spectators; and they derived infinite gratification from the questions and remarks of these men. They asked whether there were many other cities of equal size and splendour in England, and confessed that they had no expectation of seeing the wealth and comfort which were displayed in all directions. The quantity of goods exposed in the shops, and the abundant clothing worn by all ranks of the people, excited their surprise, and they will probably go back astonished that any body should be induced to leave a land flowing with riches of every description, to seek their fortunes in so poor a country as India.

CHAPTER IV.

ARRAH.

The beauties of the province of Behar have become extensively known from numerous drawings and lithographs, by the pencil of Sir Charles D'Oyley, whose views of this part of India and of Dacca are in possession of all who have the means of gratifying a taste for the splendid scenery of our Indian territories. River-travellers have little opportunity of judging of the richness and fertility of this fine tract of country, since its aspect towards the Ganges is less luxuriant than that of the greener shores of its neighbour, Bengal; but, in penetrating a little into the interior, every step is fraught with objects replete with interest. The province is not destitute of hills; and the whole surface is sufficiently undulated to give variety and picturesqueness to the views, which are distinguished by a quiet kind of beauty exceedingly delightful to the eye. Numerous mosques and pagodas, perched on rocky eminences or embosomed in trees, form the principal features, diver-

sified occasionally by fine old Moosulmaun tombs in equally happy situations.

Arrah, a small, and, as it is technically termed, "civil" station, five-and-thirty miles west of Patna, is one of the prettiest places of the kind in India. The society is very limited, seldom consisting of more than five families—those of the judge and the collector, their respective assistants, and a surgeon. Not many European stations are without indigo-factories in their immediate vicinity; but when they are few in number, a variety of circumstances may occur to prevent their contributing their quota to the society of the place. The owners are not always resident; and where there are no ladies in the family, in those seasons of the year in which the planter is wholly occupied by the process of manufacturing the indigo, there can be little communication between him and his neighbours. Sometimes the station is nearly deserted, the judge and the collector betaking themselves to the woods, and making the circuit of the district in pursuance of their official duties.

It was at one of these periods that I paid my first visit to this beautiful spot; and though it could scarcely be dignified by the name of an adventure, it formed one of the most interesting

and romantic incidents of a journey of seven hundred miles, undertaken alone, and with so limited a knowledge of the language as scarcely to permit me to boast of any acquaintance with it at all. Arrah had been mentioned by the post-master at Benares (from which station, after a rest of a few days, my journey had been continued) as a convenient halting-place for twenty-four hours, since, before I reached it, passing the hot period of each day at Ghazeepore and Buxar, I must be three nights upon the road: a prospect threatening considerable fatigue, with the few chances of obtaining any thing save broken and restless slumbers offered by a palanquin. On my arrival at Buxar, where I had expected to be furnished with letters of introduction to one of the principal families, I learned that all the married people were absent from their homes. The unbounded hospitality exercised all over India rendered this information immaterial, as far as my comfort was concerned; I could have no hesitation in entering the house of an European in the absence of its owners, as I felt assured that it would not, when reported to them, be considered an intrusion; but that, on the contrary, they would only regret that they had not been at home to receive me. I felt anxious, how-

ever, to obtain some sort of credential to supply the want of oral communication, and was therefore furnished by the post-master with a letter, written in Persian, and addressed to the servant in charge of the house belonging to the judge.

I left a dinner-party at Buxar (which I had reached in the morning) about eleven at night; and in consequence of a mistake in the directions given to the bearers, who were not in attendance at the end of the first stage, did not arrive at Arrah until eight in the morning. The mansion of the *Burra Saib* was easily found, and in going up to the principal entrance, the worthy old sirdar-bearer aroused himself from a very comfortable repose, which he was enjoying in the verandah, to do the honours of the house. It was very evident that he could not read a word of the letter, which he twisted about in his hands with a hopeless expression of countenance; but, nevertheless, he was quite prepared to render me every service in his power, and as we could not comprehend a single syllable which we addressed to each other, he very judiciously made my arrival known to the only Europeans in the place, two young gentlemen, assistants to the magistrate and civil surgeon. Previous to the arrival of these visitors, he led the way to the apartments he had

destined for my use, and I had excellent reason to be delighted with the splendour of my accommodation. Whilst perambulating the numerous chambers of this spacious mansion, under the superintendence of my dusky esquire, by a very slight stretch of the imagination, I could fancy myself in the situation of a heroine of a fairy tale, following the guidance of a strange conductor through the labyrinths of some enchanted castle. I certainly had never expected to see so perfect a realization of my youthful visions of the splendid retreat of the White Cat, the solitary palace of the King of the Black Islands, or the domicile of that most gracious of beasts, the interesting Azor. Long suites of lofty and beautifully-furnished apartments extended on every side; in the verandahs hung numerous cages filled with brilliantly-plumed birds, from the ranges of Nepaul, rare even in their neighbouring plains; an immense chamelion had taken up its abode in a tree planted in a large tub, and enclosed with lattice-work, and many other objects equally curious met my gaze; but I deferred a nearer inspection until I had changed my attire, and after crossing several handsome rooms, reached a bed-chamber, which opened into a boudoir and bathing-room, the prettiest of their

kind which I had yet seen in India. A sort of terraced verandah, shut in by a balustrade, and leading down by a flight of stone steps into a beautiful garden, stretched along one side of these delightful chambers; the prospect from this balcony was loveliness itself; beyond the bright parterres of flowers, a small lakelet spread its calm and silvery waters, while the back-ground was filled up gloriously with masses of forest-trees, bearing the richest luxuriance of foliage.

Weary and a wanderer, as I sat down amidst all this pomp of scenery, and surveyed the luxuries of the habitation which had become my temporary abode, I could not repress the vain wish that I had arrived at the end of my pilgrimage, and that I was destined to pass the remainder of my life in a retreat so well adapted to my taste, and presenting so many objects of attraction—books, pictures, flowers, and birds—to a mind already shrinking from the turmoils and troubles of the world. And now, when involved in cares and anxieties, struggling against difficulties, and perplexed by the perverse accidents of life, I cannot refrain from casting wistful glances back to that beautiful spot, sighing, as fancy tells me how calmly and tranquilly existence would have worn out in scenes so

congenial to a wearied spirit. My toilette was speedily completed; and, notwithstanding my raptures—breakfast being now a subject of considerable importance—I established myself in a splendid drawing-room, which, amongst its other embellishments, boasted a very excellent collection of books, ranged in chiffoniers, which stood between large panels in the walls, filled up with oil paintings from the pencil of the accomplished master of the house: decorations rather unusual in India, where it is so difficult to cultivate a taste for the fine arts, and where so many active enemies are at work to destroy the external appearance of volumes, generally worm-eaten and moth-eaten, if not wholly destroyed by white ants.

I had almost forgotten, over a new novel, my vexation at the obtuseness of the sirdar-bearer, who was at once the civilest and the stupidest of men, and who could not be made to understand that I required a bottle of tea, which I had brought with me, to be warmed for my morning's repast, when my studies were interrupted by the arrival of the two gentlemen before-mentioned, who hastened to pay their respects to the stranger, and to offer refreshment. My wish, it appeared, had been anticipated, for my visitors were speedily followed by

their servants, who spread a very excellent breakfast on the table, brought from the hospitable residence of my new friends, and which explained the unwillingness of the old sirdar to exert the powers of his art upon my humble bottle of tea: he knew that there was better provision at hand, and he was also fully aware of the breakfasting propensity of Anglo-Indians. The natives of Hindostan, though able to support long fasts, are by no means partial to abstinence from food beyond the usual hour for their meal, and readily enter into the feelings of Europeans, where eating is concerned. The common bearers, on a *dák* journey, will suggest the necessity of the traveller's taking some refreshment, and will readily exert themselves in procuring and preparing anything that a village bazaar may afford.

The rage of hunger being repressed, I entered into conversation with the gentlemen who were at once my entertainers and my guests, and learned from them some very interesting particulars relative to the state of the province.

On passing along the road leading to the house of the judge, which is situated at the end of the village, I was struck with the similitude between the scenery of this far and foreign land with that

which so frequently occurs in England. It looked like the approach to some populous hamlet, clustered with the houses and grounds of country gentlemen. The mansions of the European residents were too completely embosomed in trees to betray their Asiatic air; a small pagoda or two easily passed as a fantastic porter's lodge; and a large open forge, together with a yard closely resembling that of a wheelwright, completed the illusion. The village, whose outskirts had already attracted my attention, became indelibly engraved upon my memory by the narrative of some exceedingly shocking events which had lately occurred in it.

During a long series of years, the domestic quietude of Arrah had not been disturbed by brawls or bloodshed; its inhabitants appeared to be a quiet, inoffensive, industrious race, removed from all temptation to commit outrages on the persons or purses of their fellow-creatures. In the midst of this tranquillity, the judge was surprised by the sudden appearance of a peasant, who, with looks betokening the most direful alarm, informed him, that in ploughing a field in the close vicinity of the village, he had turned up the earth which covered the corse of a newly-murdered man. The

judge immediately proceeded in person to the spot, attended by the *cutwal* of the place, and other officials. The body had been stripped; but, by some accident, the knife, with which its hasty sepulture had been effected, had dropped into the grave. Upon farther search, a vast number of human remains, in various stages of decomposition. were discovered; the field, indeed, appeared to be a perfect Golgotha, and as no one had been missed from the neighbourhood, it followed that the victims must be strangers. The horrible system of *Thuggy* had not, at that period, been fully developed, nor was it supposed to be practised in any part of this well-governed province, which had as yet escaped the infamous celebrity acquired by so many of its neighbours. The only clue to the perpetrator of these fearful murders was afforded by the knife, for suspicion failed to rest upon any inhabitant of the quiet village, where it appeared no man distrusted his neighbour: yet, as it was scarcely possible that professional banditti could exist so close to a populous place without the knowledge of the police, the slaughter was deemed to be the work of a single assassin, living in the heart of a well-regulated community, and outwardly conforming to its simple and harmless prac-

tices. Farther investigation established the truth of this conjecture. The knife was acknowledged at once by the blacksmith of the village to be his own workmanship; he had manufactured many such; but a difficulty remained in tracing it to the purchaser. The owner of a toddy-shop, the only person who was in the habit of offering accommodation to travellers and wayfarers—the class to which the unfortunate victims evidently belonged—was well-known as a customer, and his apprehension led to a disclosure of the frightful details of his infamous calling.

Dissipated and profligate characters alone, in India, indulge in the pernicious habit of drinking fermented liquors; travellers of this description, allured by the intoxicating beverage offered by the owner of the toddy-shop, were induced to take up their quarters for the night under his roof. They were readily stupified by the effects of this potent spirit, and in that helpless condition easily became the prey of their treacherous host. It was his custom to strangle the unfortunate wretches who fell into his toils, and, after stripping, to bury them in a convenient field. Usually, he made the graves too deep for any ordinary accident to reveal their hideous secrets; but, upon the last occasion, some

unforeseen circumstance retarded the perpetration of the murder to so late an hour, that he had not time to take the proper precautions, and the whole mystery of his abominable occupation was laid open to his shuddering neighbours. The confession of the assassin placed the matter beyond all doubt, and his execution restored the quiet village of Arrah to its usual character of innocence and peace. *Thugs* are generally grégarious, but this monster, though evidently belonging to the tribe designated by that name, pursued his dreadful trade alone.

One of the relators of the foregoing incident remarked, that he had the authority of a very respectable native for believing that practised murderers frequently prowl about the roads and villages in disguise, apparently in so helpless a condition as to disarm the suspicions of travellers; who, strong, active, and courageous, entertain no apprehension from the sinister designs of withered, wretched-looking objects, whom they could annihilate at once with a blow. "The narrator of the following incident," continued my kind entertainer, "was proceeding homeward from Lucknow, together with some others of his friends who resided near his abode; before they had quitted the Oude frontier they fell in with a Mussulman *faqueer*, who

was apparently travelling in the same direction. As is often the case with native travellers (and the custom, by the way, affords great facilities to *Thugs*), a proposal was made that they should join company; this was agreed to, and the party proceeded forward. A little farther on they met another person whose abject and scarcely human appearance excited disgust as well as compassion. He begged piteously for alms, and represented himself to be in a starving condition. The narrator, a Rohilla Patan, of some blood, felt indignant at the intrusion of this squalid stranger, who, not content with asking charity, demanded to be allowed to travel on in company; the rest of the party except the *faqueer*, who was not so scrupulous, objected also. The *faqueer*, however, assured the new comer of his protection, and gave him some rice, which he had got ready-cooked; and with this disagreeable addition to their number, the company proceeded. Towards the evening of that day, the whole of the travellers arrived near a village, in which it was proposed to rest during the night: to this all except the *faqueer* agreed; but he had some vow to perform, which obliged him to take up his quarters under a tree, and, having selected one for the purpose, he pulled out his *narial*, or smoking appara-

tus, spread his carpet, and asked the mendicant, to whom he had shown so much kindness, to go into the village and get him a piece of lighted charcoal. The main body, after exchanging compliments, parted, and went on towards the village; but they had scarcely proceeded four hundred yards before they heard a cry coming from the direction of the place where they had left their late companions. Running back with all haste, they found the *faqueer* and his miserable-looking guest struggling on the ground; but before they could reach the combatants, the former had got the better of his adversary, whom he was holding down. A knife and a divided noose were lying on the ground. The *faqueer* explained the circumstances in which he had been discovered in the following manner: his faithless messenger had pretended to go upon the errand to the village, but, instead of proceeding thither, had hidden himself beneath some bushes, and, watching his opportunity, while the *faqueer* was busy about his smoking materials, stole softly behind him, and contrived to throw a noose over his head. The attack would have been rendered instantaneously fatal, had not the *faqueer*, while ignorant of his danger, put his hand to his throat, and luckily got his fingers entangled in the cord, which prevented

it from being so closely and tightly drawn as is usual in similar attempts. More providentially still, he had a knife in his girdle; this he drew, and having severed the noose, he threw himself on the villainous *Thug*, who, now compelled to trust to personal strength alone, was speedily worsted in the conflict. The assassin being secured, it was proposed that he should suffer death upon the spot, a punishment he justly merited; but which, notwithstanding the abundance of proof, would not perhaps be inflicted by the judicial authorities of a country so ill-governed as that of Oude, where the greatest criminals are frequently allowed to escape; but the *faqueer* again interceded in behalf of the ungrateful wretch, and, at his earnest persuasion, the rest of the party agreed to let him go. The *faqueer* was not, however, inclined to suffer his prisoner to escape altogether without receiving some punishment for his misdoings; he said that he could not part with him without giving him a token in remembrance of his late adventure, and, sharpening his knife, he cut off the *Thug's* nose, and then gathering his effects together, pursued his journey with great coolness and composure.

"Knowing the narrator of this story," continued my new friend, "to be a man of respectable cha-

racter and undoubted veracity, as he assured me that he was an eye-witness of the whole affair, I have no doubt whatever that the incident actually occurred. From another intelligent native, with whom I conversed on the subject of those numerous hordes of banditti which, during so many ages, have been supposed to infest various parts of Hindostan, I learned that there existed a tradition which imputed the massacre of three thousand *Thugs* to the emperor Shah Jehan, who pursued these wretches with a secret but unremitting enmity, in consequence of the murder of one of his officers. The story is thus told, and, though not so well authenticated as many of a similar description, there being no direct evidence of the facts related, is generally believed by those who have handed it down from their forefathers.

"An officer of high repute as well as great personal courage, was sent by the emperor on a confidential mission to Bengal. Having fulfilled his instructions, he set out on his return to the capital, and while upon the road, fell in with a considerable body of *Thugs*. Being of a wary and circumspect disposition, and, moreover, well-acquainted with the habits and manners of this description of robbers, he was upon his guard, and as they dared not

make an open attack, he knew that he was only in danger from stratagem. Completely alive to all the devices of his enemies, the first party, who tracked his route to a considerable distance, were unable to take him at disadvantage, and being at length weary of the pursuit, they made him over for a sum of money to a fresh band, who were easily incited by the report of the rich effects which he carried about with him, to attempt to possess themselves of them. These villains were as unsuccessful as their predecessors; they found the murder beset with too many difficulties to be accomplished, and meeting with another set of their associates, who were buoyed up with inflated notions of their own cleverness, they made the same bargain with them which had formerly appeared so promising to themselves. The officer continued to be so strictly upon his guard, that these new assailants had not a single opportunity of approaching his person, until he had nearly reached the end of his journey. The traveller's horse becoming quite exhausted, while in the midst of a wide plain, it was absolutely necessary to afford the wearied animal a short respite; and directing the *syce* to clean his charge and then to keep watch until he should awake, he laid himself down with his bundle of

valuables by his side. The *syce* cleaned his master's horse, but, as it might be expected from a Hindoo domestic, neglected the latter part of the command, and soon, weary of acting as sentinel, lay down and fell asleep. A *Thug*, who was on the reconnoitre, crept slowly and stealthily through the grass, and succeeded in flinging a noose over the bundle, which was too heavy for him to carry off without assistance; he then retreated, but the officer, who only counterfeited sleep, aware of the whole proceeding, disengaged his property from the snare and fastened the noose round the leg of his less vigilant *syce*. In consequence of this manœuvre, when two or three of the confederates began to draw in the line, instead of securing the prize they sought, they got nothing but the astonished and half-stupified *syce*. The officer, with a laugh, mounted his horse, and rode onward until he entered the capital. Here he considered himself safe, and rejoicing at having escaped so many and such dangerous enemies, entered, as he began to feel hungry, the house of a person who kept a cook-shop, and ordered a *kubáb*, or dish of roast-meat, for his regale. He was shewn into an upper apartment furnished for the reception of visitors, and was soon supplied with what he required. A short

time afterwards, a second guest appeared, who was ushered into the same room and entertained in a similar manner. Some time elapsed, every thing remained quiet in the travellers' apartment, who did not make their re-appearance, as the man of the house had expected them to do when they had finished their meal. Somewhat surprised, he ran up stairs, and was horror-struck by the sight of a strangled corpse lying on the floor. He recognized in the murdered man the person of the first traveller; his assassin had effected his escape through a small window. Overwhelmed as he was by this shocking catastrophe, the cook had sense enough to know that, unless he could give an explanation of the business sufficiently clear to satisfy the *cutwal*, he should not escape death, and perhaps not even then. After some consultation with his wife and servant, he determined on concealing the affair altogether; he, therefore, put the body into a large wide-mouthed jar, and tying some heavy stones about it, flung it into the river. Murder, they say, will out; and this case proved one in point, for the cook's artifice did not succeed; the waters, refusing to conceal this foul deed, cast up the jar, which rose to the surface of the stream. It chanced that his majesty the emperor was sitting in an open

balcony of his palace, and beheld the jar swimming down the river. Curiosity, or some undefinable motive, caused him to determine to see what fortune had sent in this adventure; his commands to that effect were speedily obeyed, the jar was fished out of the water and the dreadful nature of its contents made manifest. The king, enraged beyond all bounds by the discovery that such fearful acts were perpetrated close to his own residence, sent for the *cutwal*, and told him that he should lose his head unless he brought the murderer to punishment within a given time. The *cutwal*, stimulated by the fear of death, made strict inquiry, but for a considerable period without success; at length, he summoned all the potters of the city, and placing the jar before them, it was recognized by the manufacturers and traced to the owner of the cook-shop. The poor wretch loudly protested his innocence, and the king consented to spare his life on condition of his bringing the real offender to justice. The cook's wits were sharpened by the danger in which he stood, and, calling to mind the person of the second traveller, he succeeded, after some time, in pointing him out to the police. A ring, which was indentified as belonging to the murdered officer, being found amongst the gar-

ments of the prisoner, placed the matter beyond a doubt, and Shah Jehan having examined him privately, and thus made himself acquainted with the frightful nature of the practices, and the extensive combinations, of the *Thugs*, dissembled deeply, and, pardoning the offender, rendered him the instrument of a more signal act of justice. Through the agency of this person, he succeeded in persuading great numbers of professional *Thugs* to enter his service; it is said by some that he formed them into a distinct corps, but this was only a snare to ensure their destruction; for he turned their own arts upon them, and at a feast to which they were solemnly invited, he surrounded the miscreants with his guards, and they were all cut to pieces."

These narratives, and the discussions they produced wore away the morning; stories of murdered travellers, however frequently told, are always invested with a strange charm, and in the last adventure the introduction of the jar afforded a pleasing illustration of the popular tale of *The Forty Thieves*. To a lover of those agreeable fictions which go under the name of the *Arabian Nights*, some of the most delightful circumstances attendant upon travelling in India, proceed from the recognition of curious things mentioned in the wild and

wonderful legends, which have beguiled so many hours of our youth. The first time I saw one of the earthen-ware jars, in common use in Hindostan, fully capable of containing a man, standing in the small yard of a respectable native's house, the midnight sally of Morgiana recurred to my mind, with all the freshness and vividness made by the perusal of her courageous exploit, in years long numbered with the past.

The sun being on the decline, I was tempted, by the extreme beauty of the surrounding pleasure-grounds, to walk abroad, and, attended by the two gentlemen, entered a flower-garden, in which, in addition to the blossoming plants common to India, a great variety of European exotics bloomed. With the exception of balsams, single althæas and roses, very few of the out-of-door flowers of English growth are to be seen in the gardens of Hindostan; even the mignonette, though a native of Arabia, is not common, but will thrive, like many others, if a succession of fresh seeds can be procured: for, unless the cultivators of distant places exchange their seeds with each other, foreign productions soon dwindle and die away.

This lovely garden led to the banks of a large tank, or rather lake, one of the most beautiful of

those pieces of artificial water with which the cultivated parts of India are so profusely embellished. In the centre, an island covered with lustrous flowering shrubs, formed a nest for innumerable small white herons, with snowy crests and feet of shivered topazes. Glancing in and out of the dark green foliage, skimming along the surface of the water, or bending into it from the golden sands sloping from their flowery abode, these delicate creatures recalled to the mind the fanciful creations with which painters delight to people their enchanted islands and haunts of fairies. At every step, I was reminded of the magic touches of Stanfield's pencil, so exquisitely depicting the scenery in *Oberon*, or of the still more magnificent delineations of paradise by Martin.

Opposite to a ghaut, or flight of steps, a superb tree spread its lofty and umbrageous canopy over a well. This monarch of the forest being held in great reverence by the Hindoo population of the place, groups of natives were gathered under it, filling their water-pots, or proceeding to and fro laden with those graceful vessels, which add such a picturesque effect to the finely-moulded forms and becoming garments of Indians of all castes. The crimson splendours of a setting sun threw a

rich glow upon every object, and lit up the whole scene with hues divine. I have subsequently met with many persons to whom this glorious landscape was familiar, and who spoke of it with indifference; but even under the influence of weak health and considerable bodily fatigue, it appeared to me one of the loveliest spots of earth on which my eyes had ever rested.

My companions pointed to a small tope, which fringed the border of the tank, and told me that it had been for many years the abode of a *faqueer*, whose story was somewhat romantic. A former proprietor of this beautiful domain, in a promenade through his grounds, stumbled over a strange unsightly object, which lay huddled up under a tree. On questioning this unfortunate remnant of humanity, the miserable wretch told him that he for a long time had not had any other shelter than that which the boughs of the trees afforded, or any food excepting the wild roots and berries of the wood. He said that he had never been molested by the former owner of the estate, and that he hoped he should not now be driven out from the rude asylum for which he had conceived a strong attachment. The early part of his life had been spent with credit in the Company's military service,

but, unhappily, smitten with a loathsome disease, on procuring his discharge, his wife and family refused to receive him, and thrust him from the door, and he was compelled to wander about at a distance from his fellow-men, who abjured companionship with a leper. The extreme misery of his existence rendered him totally regardless of life, or the means of supporting it, and abandoning himself to fate, he lay down at night at the foot of a tree, without any security from the attacks of wild animals, and exposed to the ravages of the jackalls, so bold as to gnaw the dead flesh from his hands and feet as they prowled around him, the bones in many places being laid bare. But the sufferings of this unfortunate had now reached their climax,—he had met with a benefactor at last. His mental and bodily grievances were soothed and alleviated by the compassionate kindness of his new friend, and the poor outcast leper found that, under the guardianship of a faithful follower of the divine precepts of the Christian religion, life had still many comforts and much happiness in store.

Mr. G—— lost no time in building a commodious hut, in which the maimed object of his bounty would be effectually sheltered from the

inclemencies of the weather and the incursions of wild beasts. The next acquisition of the *faqueer*, after his establishment in this habitation, was rather a singular one: he was provided with a tattoo, or country pony, which had free liberty to graze on the adjacent pastures. A beggar on horseback is frequently talked about, but seldom seen, yet the exhibition is not very uncommon in India, where mendicity is a trade, and where pretenders to sanctity ask alms while they are carried about in palanquins. The state of the poor leper's feet rendered some conveyance necessary, and he had, in consequence of the various comforts lavished upon him by his kind protector, become sufficiently attached to existence to make an effort to preserve it. Accordingly, mounted on his pony, he took his daily rounds through the village; and those who had shunned him while lying deserted on the bare earth, now, that he had shaken off a portion of his wretchedness, and basked under the favour of a great man, crowded around him with gifts. He obtained an ample supply of food and garments from the stores of the villagers, and began to accumulate money; though formerly so reckless of life and limb as to remain at the mercy of savage beasts, when possessed of an establishment of his

own, he became rather particular respecting its arrangements, and, not liking the way in which it had been thatched, ordered a new roof at his own expense: so true it is, that one acquisition always leads to the desire of others.

The *faqueer*, in all probability, died a rich man; for, although left to perish at the period in which, disgusted with the cruelty of the world, he had abandoned himself to the most abject wretchedness, no one was deaf to the solicitations of a person who had, through the hands of a gentleman in universal estimation, received so many marks of the favour of an over-ruling providence.

On my return to the house, I found dinner prepared, and the founders of the feast, taking leave, left me to the enjoyment of my repast; and I again, while seated alone in an illuminated apartment, and attended by strange domestics, who did their spiriting silently, might fancy myself in the castle of some enchanter. Nor was the illusion dispelled until I had quitted the mansion and was upon my road to Dinapore; for, in exploring the different chambers which led to the one in which I was to repose for the night, it was impossible to banish the recollection of those numerous errant dames in white muslin, whose

adventures, in long galleries and interminable suites of deserted rooms, had charmed my fancy in days long past. Unlike the ladies of romance, however, I enjoyed profound repose, and rather unwillingly obeyed the summons of the old sirdar, who knocked at my door to acquaint me that it was time to rise. I quitted Arrah with an indelible impression on my mind; but can never hope to convey to my readers the effect produced by its wild tales and gorgeous scenery.

CHAPTER V.

SKETCHES OF REMARKABLE LIVING CHARACTERS IN INDIA.

COLONEL GARDINER.—THE BEGUM SUMROO.

A FEW years ago, India presented a wide field for adventure. The distracted state of the country, the ambitious projects and conflicting interests of native princes, were highly favourable circumstances to those who brought with them a competent knowledge of the art of war and of military discipline, and who preferred a wild, erratic, roving life, amongst the children of the soil, to the regular service of the India Company. There are two individuals still living in the Bengal presidency, and occupying a distinguished, though singular, position in society, whose eventful career, if circumstantially related, could not fail to prove highly interesting. The general outlines of the history of the Begum Sumroo, and of Colonel Gardiner, of Khasgunje, are known to every person who has visited the theatre of their exploits,

but very few are acquainted with the details; for such is the shifting nature of Anglo-Indian society, that it is impossible to gain more than the passing information of the day, in places rendered memorable from circumstances of universal notoriety, but of which nobody can give the particulars.

Some apology ought, perhaps, to be made for associating the name of so gallant and highly-respected an officer as Colonel Gardiner with that of the Begum, and her still more worthless husband; but as many persons who have not been in India, are puzzled by the announcement of the marriages, or projected marriages, of the daughters of this gentleman with the nephews of the King of Delhi, an explanation of the circumstances which have produced these apparently extraordinary alliances, may prove acceptable. The writer of these pages does not pretend to know more of Colonel Gardiner than the tongue of rumour could tell, or a casual meeting in society could afford; but so remarkable a person naturally made a strong impression, and the anecdotes extant concerning him were too singular to be easily forgotten. Colonel Gardiner's tall, commanding figure, soldier-like countenance, and military air render his appearance very striking. When at his

own residence, and associating with natives, it is said that he adopts the Asiatic costume; but while visiting a large military station, in company with the resident of Lucknow, he wore a blue surtout, resembling the undress uniform of the British army, but profusely ornamented with silk lace.

Colonel Gardiner, who is a connexion of the noble family bearing that name, came out to India in the King's service, which he soon afterwards quitted. The cause of his resignation is variously related; and in the absence of an authentic account, it would, perhaps, be wrong to give sanction to any one of the reports afloat concerning it. At this period, it was impossible to foresee that the tide of fortune would bring the British Government of India into actual warfare with the sovereigns of provinces so far beyond the frontier, that human ambition dared not contemplate their subjugation. Many loyal men were, therefore, induced to follow the banners of native princes, under the expectation that they never could be called upon to bear arms against their own country; but fate decreed it otherwise, and, in the Mahratta war, those officers who had entered into Holkar's service found themselves in a very awkward predicament, especially as they were not

permitted a choice, or even allowed to remain neutral, their new masters endeavouring to force them, upon pain of death, to commit treason to the land of their birth, by fighting in the ranks of a hostile force.

In some of the native courts, the English were immediately put to death upon the approach of the enemy, or on the slightest suspicion of their fidelity. Upon more than one occasion, Colonel Gardiner, who, independent of his military skill, possessed a thorough knowledge of the native character and very considerable talent, penetrated the designs of his employers, and withdrew in time from meditated treachery; but his escape from Holkar was of the most hazardous description, not inferior in picturesque incident and personal jeopardy to that of the renowned Dugald Dalgetty, who was not more successful in all lawful strategy than the subject of this too brief memoir.

Anxious to secure the services of so efficient an officer, after all fair means had failed, Holkar tied his prisoner to a gun, aud threatened him with immediate destruction should he persist in refusing to take the field with his army. The Colonel remained staunch, and, perchance in the hope of tiring him out, the execution was suspended, and

he was placed under a guard, who had orders never to quit him for a single instant. Walking one day along the edge of a bank leading by a precipitous descent to a river, Colonel Gardiner suddenly determined to make a bold effort to escape, and perceiving a place fitted to his purpose, he shouted out *bismillah!* 'in the name of God!' and flung himself down an abyss of some forty or fifty feet deep. None were inclined to follow him, but guns were fired, and an alarm sounded in the town. He recovered his feet, and making for the river, plunged into it; after swimming for some distance, finding that his pursuers gained upon him, he took shelter in a friendly covert, and with merely his mouth above the water, waited until they had passed; he then landed on the opposite side, and proceeded by unfrequented paths to a town in the neighbourhood, which was under the command of a friend, who, though a native, and a servant of Holkar, he thought would afford him protection. This man proved trustworthy, and after remaining concealed some time, the colonel ventured out in the disguise of a grass-cutter, and reaching the British outposts in safety, was joyously received by his countrymen. He was appointed to the command of a regiment of irregular horse, which

he still retains; and his services in the field, at the head of these brave soldiers, have not been more advantageous to the British Government, than the accurate acquaintance before-mentioned, which his long and intimate association with natives enabled him to obtain of the Asiatic character. It was to his diplomatic skill and knowledge of the best methods of treaty, that we owed the capitulation of one of those formidable hill-fortresses (Komulmair, in Mewar), whose reduction by arms would have been at the expense of an immense sacrifice of human life. The commandant of the division despatched to take possession of it, wearied out by the procrastinating and indecisive spirit of the natives, would have stormed the place at every disadvantage, had not Colonel Gardiner persuaded him to entrust the negotiation to his hands. The result proved that he had made a just estimate of his own powers: the garrison agreed to give up the fortress on the payment of their arrears; and Colonel Tod, in his *Annals of Rajast'han*, mentions the circumstance as one highly honourable to the British character, that, there being not more than four thousand rupees at the time in the English camp, an order, written by the commandant for the remainder, upon the *shroffs* or

bankers in the neighbourhood, was taken without the least hesitation, the natives not having the slightest doubt that it would be paid upon presentation.*

* The above passage is preserved entire for the purpose of retaining an anecdote, which shews the impression made by British faith in India, and to afford an opportunity of apologizing to Colonel Tod for having inadvertently sought to deprive him of one of his laurels. In a conversation with an officer who served at Komulmair, he mentioned the circumstance of its capitulation, in consequence of Colonel Gardiner's adroit method of dealing with the natives, as a story current in the camp; and not having Colonel Tod's work upon Rajast'han at hand to refer to, the writer told the tale as it was told to her, unaware that the gallant and learned author was in command at the time. There is no British name connected with India for which she entertains so high a respect, and no history of the country to which she has been so deeply indebted for sources of amusement and information. In justification of herself, she can only observe, that she stated in the commencement of her account of two very remarkable personages, that the whole of the details rested upon hearsay evidence; the chapter was originally written with a view to induce Colonel Gardiner to come forward with an autobiography full of enterprize and interest, which would correct any misstatements made under circumstances so adverse to the collection of authentic information; and she can scarcely regret an inaccuracy which could not detract from Colonel Tod's high reputation, since it has drawn from his pen the clever article which appeared in a late number of the *Asiatic Journal*.

The marriage of Colonel Gardiner forms one of the most singular incidents in his romantic story. In the midst of his hazardous career, he carried off a Mahommedan princess, the sister of one of the lesser potentates of the Deccan, who, though now reduced to comparative insignificance, during the rise and progress of the Mahrattas, were personages of considerable consequence.

> Ever the first to climb a tower,
> As venturous in a lady's bower,

the sacred recesses of the zenana were penetrated by the enterprising lover, who, at the moment in which his life was threatened by the brother's treachery, bore away his prize in triumph, and sought an asylum in another court.

An European, of popular manners and military experience, could in those days easily place himself at the head of a formidable body of soldiers, ready to follow his fortunes, and trusting to his arrangements with the princes whose cause he supported for their pay, which was frequently in arrear, or dependent upon the capture of some rich province. In the command of such a troop, Colonel Gardiner was a welcome guest wherever he went, and, until the affair with Holkar, he had

always contrived to secure his retreat whenever it was prudent to commence a new career in another quarter.

It is difficult to say what sort of bridal contract is gone through between a Moslem beauty and a Christian gentleman, but the ceremony is supposed to be binding; at least it is considered so in India, a native female not losing the respect of her associates by forming such a connexion. The marriage of Colonel Gardiner seems perfectly satisfactory to the people of Hindostan, for the lady has not only continued stedfast in the Mahomedan faith, and in the strict observance of all the restrictions prescribed to Asiatic females of rank, but has brought up her daughters in the same religious persuasion, and in the same profound seclusion,—points seldom conceded by an European father. They are, therefore, eligible to match with the princes of the land, their mother's family connexions and high descent atoning for the disadvantage of foreign ancestry upon the paternal side. Educated according to the most approved fashion of an oriental court, they are destined to spend the remainder of their lives in the zenana; and this choice for her daughters shews that their mother, at least, does not consider exclusion from the

world, in which European women reign and revel, to be any hardship.

So little of the spirit of adventure is now stirring in India, that the Misses Gardiner, or the young Begums, or whatsoever appellation it may be most proper to designate them by, have not attracted the attention of the enterprising portion of the European community. Doubtless their beauty and accomplishments are blazoned in native society, but, excepting upon the occasion of an announcement like that referred to in the Calcutta periodicals, the existence of these ladies is scarcely known to their father's countrymen residing in India. We are ignorant whether their complexions partake most of the eastern or of the northern hue, or whether they have the slightest idea of the privileges from which their mother's adherence to Mahomedan usages has debarred them. Their situation, singular as it may appear in England, excites little or no interest; nobody seems to lament that they were not brought up in the Christian religion, or permitted those advantages which the half-caste offspring of women of lower rank enjoy; and, acquainted with the circumstances of the case, the editors of the aforesaid periodicals do not enter into any explanation of intelligence of the

most startling nature to English readers, who, in their ignorance of facts, are apt to fancy that European ladies in India are willing to enter into the zenanas of native princes.

Colonel Gardiner has of course adopted a great many of the opinions and ideas of the people with whom he has passed so great a portion of his time, and in his mode of living he may be termed half an Asiatic; this, however, does not prevent him from being a most acceptable companion to the European residents, who take the greatest delight in his society whenever he appears amongst them. His autobiography would be a work of the highest value, affording a picture of Indian policy, with which few besides himself have ever had an opportunity of becoming so intimately acquainted. As he is still in the prime and vigour of existence, we may hope that some such employment of these "piping times of peace" may be suggested to him, and that he may be induced to devote the hours spent in retirement at Khasgunje to the writing or the dictation of the incidents of his early life.

From a personal narrative of this nature, we should become acquainted with the *Condottieri*, if they may so be styled, of India and obtain an insight into all the complicated systems of intrigue and

espionage so necessary to secure the interests of those splendid mercenaries. Colonel Gardiner had a native follower attached to his service, whose exploits were of the most daring and romantic character—a one-eyed fellow, persons who in India are supposed to be compensated for the defect in their vision, by a double allowance of sagacity. This man smoked his pipe in the tent of the Pindarree chief, the night before the British troops put his forces to the rout, and captured his women and baggage. Had the authorities consented to act upon the intelligence brought by this accomplished spy, the camp might have been more effectually surprised, and the leader himself taken; but though the event proved that the information communicated by Colonel Gardiner was correct, the fidelity of his emissary was either distrusted, or the commandant did not choose to owe success to a person of his description.

In looking back upon past events, the colonel occasionally expresses a regret that he should have been induced to quit the King's service, in which, in all probability, he would have attained the highest rank; but, eminently qualified for the situation in which he has been placed, and more than reconciled to the destiny which binds him to a

foreign soil, the station he occupies leaves him little to desire, and he has it in his power to be still farther useful to society by unlocking the stores of a mind fraught with information of the highest interest.

The life of the Begum Sumroo presents a more extraordinary tissue of events, extraordinary even in Asiatic annals, notwithstanding the numerous stepping-stones to wealth and power which were offered to the enterprising in the wild and troublous periods of Indian misrule. In early youth, this singular woman attached herself to a German adventurer, called by the natives Sumroo; but whether this appellation was a corruption of Summers, a name he is said to have taken upon his entrance into the Company's service, or of a *soubriquet* supposed to have been bestowed upon him on account of his gloomy and saturnine aspect, is not known; both versions of the story being equally current in India. This man commenced his career in the East as a private soldier in the English army, from which he speedily deserted, and made his way to the Upper Provinces. He is described as a low-born, uneducated person, so illiterate as not to be able to write his own name. He possessed talents, however, which recommended him to the notice of

Cossim Ali, nawaub of Bengal, who took him into favour, and gave him the command of his army. While in the service of this prince, Sumroo perpetrated a deed which stamped his name with indelible infamy. Inviting the English residents at Patna to his table, while partaking with the most unreserved confidence of the banquet, he gave a signal for a general massacre, and not one escaped the assassin's dagger. This act of perfidy proved as useless as it had been base and treacherous; the Company's troops under Major Adams speedily recaptured the city, and soon afterwards the entire conquest of Bengal obliged Cossim Ali and his followers to seek refuge at the court of Sujah Dowlah, Nawab Vizier of Oude. During the remainder of his life, English officers had often the mortification of seeing this renegade basking in the sunshine of favour at the courts of native princes; and though, as their star prevailed, he was compelled to try his fortune in more distant scenes, his prosperity daily increased. He established himself at the head of a considerable force, who were attached to his person, and wanted nothing but pay to be exceedingly effective. Finding it difficult to satisfy them or their leader, Nudjift Khan put him into possession of a very considerable *jaghire*, or

rather a small principality, in the province of Delhi, which the Begum retains to this day.

Sumroo died in 1776, and, at his decease, the corps which he had raised was kept up in the name of his son, though the chief authority fell into the hands of the extraordinary woman who has since made so conspicuous a figure in Hindostan. The origin of Zaib ul Nissa (ornament of her sex), a name which, as well as the title of *Begum*, was conferred upon her by the King of Delhi, is not known. By some persons it is said that she was a dancing-girl; and many are of opinion that she was a Cashmerian by birth, an idea which has arisen from the remarkable fairness of her complexion. But though this is not a common circumstance amongst the natives of Hindostan, instances are sufficiently frequent to render it very possible that she was born at Agra, the place in which she attached herself to the fortunes of Sumroo.

There can be no doubt that the Begum possessed a more than ordinary share of personal charms, for, at an advanced age, the remains were very striking. She is rather under the middle size, delicately formed, with fine-chiselled features, brilliant hazel eyes, a complexion very little darker than that of an Italian, and hands, arms, and feet

which Zoffani, the painter, declared to be models of beauty. Of these, though now grown fat and wrinkled, she is still justly proud.

It is well known that, while apparently excluded from all share of authority, women in India in reality often obtain unlimited sway over their husbands' property. Little or nothing is said of Sumroo's son, but his widow, as she is called, speedily became a person of great importance. By some of her contemporaries it is averred that, at a very early period of life, "her highness" became a convert to the Roman Catholic faith, which she now professes, and that she was married to the German by the forms of that church; others seem to think these circumstances doubtful, and are of opinion that, like many Mahommedan women living with Europeans, she for a long period retained her own religion, though considering herself as much the wife of her protector as if he had fulfilled all the ceremonial of the Moslem contract.

After the death of Sumroo, the Begum entered into another matrimonial engagement with a French adventurer, a Monsieur L'Oiseaux, or Le Vassu, who had been in the Mahratta service, under General Perron, and was afterwards employed by her as

commander-in-chief of the troops belonging to her *jaghire*. Like many widows, the lady soon discovered that she had committed a grievous error in the choice of a second husband; but there are very few who could extricate themselves so boldly and artfully from the entanglement. The cause of the Begum's earnest desire to get rid of her new lord is variously related; but, in all probability, those persons are right who have attributed it to the desire which the Frenchman manifested to return to Europe.

Native women of rank and wealth are well aware that they will lose all their consequence in a foreign country, and they usually make it a *sine quâ non*, that those whom they espouse shall agree to spend the remainder of their days in India. Naturally alarmed at a proposition which seemed to be dictated by the purest selfishness, and which assured her that she was indebted for her husband to the wealth she had amassed, and which he now desired to lavish amongst strangers to her, by whom she would be regarded as an object of contempt, she made no outward opposition, but, dissembling deeply, determined to circumvent a plan which threatened to be so injurious to her interests.

Le Vassu was no match in diplomatic arts for

his subtle wife; she pretended to enter with the greatest readiness into the scheme, but conjured him to keep his intentions secret, lest the troops, exasperated by the abandonment of their chief, should endeavour to detain them by force. While apparently engaged with the greatest alacrity in the collection of the gold and jewels which he proposed to carry along with him, she employed various emissaries to inflame the minds of the people against the Frenchman, and to represent his intended desertion in the most odious colours. These agents took care to contrast her love and devotion to the interests of those over whom she had been placed, with her husband's base betrayal of their confidence; and when every thing was prepared according to her wishes, she alarmed Le Vassu with rumours of an intended revolt. She assured him that there would be the greatest difficulty in effecting their escape from a highly-excited people, who had resolved upon their destruction should they be taken in the act of quitting the province, and declaring her determination never to survive the disgrace of a capture, she represented the horrors which would ensue in such a glowing manner, and worked so strongly upon the imagination of her husband, that he agreed to follow her example,

promising to kill himself should their party be insufficient to quell the insurgents.

Having made these arrangements, they set forward on their journey, attended by a strong escort, and each being provided with pistols, which the lady well knew how to use. At the appointed spot, the escort was attacked, or apparently attacked, by a party in the Begum's interest; the guards were put to the rout, and the fugitives seemed to be completely in the power of their supposed enemies. There was a great deal of confusion, and, amid several reports of musketry, news was brought to the bewildered Frenchman, that the Begum had shot herself. He instantly dismounted from his elephant, and rushing to her palanquin, found the attendants in great affliction and disorder; these people confirmed the fatal intelligence, giving as a proof the lady's veil saturated with blood. Knowing the resolute disposition of his wife, he concluded from this act of despair that all was lost; and destitute of the resources of a strong mind, and unsuspicious of double-dealing, he saved his enemy from the guilt of his actual murder, by putting a pistol to his head.

The Begum, taking care to have better information than her luckless spouse, the moment his death

was ascertained, threw open the doors of her palanquin, and mounting an elephant, addressed the troops in eloquent and impassioned language, descanting upon the affection she bore to the people bequeathed to her care by their former chief, her opposition to the wishes of the dastard who would have plundered and left them, and her determination to live and die in the discharge of the important duties which she was called upon to perform.

Until this moment, it is said, she had never appeared in public; but the exigency of the case excused her assumption of masculine rights. Her appeal to the soldiers was received with the greatest enthusiasm, and they conveyed her back to camp with shouts and acclamations. From that period she publicly exercised all the rights of a sovereign, and has retained undisputed possession of her authority. Officers formerly attached to the Mahratta service relate that they have seen her in the zenith of her beauty, leading on her troops in person, and manifesting, in the midst of the most frightful carnage, the reckless intrepidity which seems only to belong to the other sex.

Upon one of these occasions, during the reign of Shah Alum, she is said to have saved the Mogul

empire, by rallying and encouraging her troops, when those of the king were flying before the enemy. It is certain that she performed good service, and its reward was proportionate. The emperor created her a princess, or *begum*, in her own right, exalting her to a rank only second to that of the imperial family. Linking her fortunes with those of Delhi, she, with her usual foresight, shewed herself favourable to the English interests; and, in the treaties of 1805, adroitly managed to have her territories not only confirmed to her, but exempted from the jurisdiction of the civil power, greatly, it is said, to the obstruction of all executive measures of police.

The internal management of her estate, however, renders her independence less objectionable, since she contrives to keep her subjects in excellent order, and to render the revenues extremely productive.

The town of Seerdhuna, the capital of her district, is populous and flourishing; her fields, according to common report, look greener, and her peasantry more contented, than those of native states, or even of the Company's provinces in her neighbourhood. She maintains a body of troops for the protection of her own person and the

collection of the revenue, besides the quota she is required to furnish to assist in the performance of the police duties at Meerut. These soldiers are under the command of officers of European descent; but, to judge from the accounts which sometimes appear in the Calcutta papers of the abject nature of their enforced subservience to the will of an imperious and arbitrary woman, they cannot be of a very high grade.

The Begum's troops, who are principally Rajpoots,—tall stout men, but, like all the retainers of native princes, of haughty and insolent demeanour,—are clad in uniforms of dark-blue broadcloth, loose vests, reaching nearly to the feet, and fastened round the waist with scarlet cummurbunds; their turbans are of the same colour, and they are well armed and mounted. Her highness has also a park of artillery in very excellent order; and altogether does not make a contemptible appearance in the field.

The siege of Bhurtpore revived all the military ardour of the Begum, who was very desirous to appear before the place in person, and to obtain some share of the glory and the prize-money. The commander-in-chief, who did not think her hand-

ful of retainers of much importance, endeavoured to reconcile the amazon to her exclusion, by offering to place the holy city of Muttra under her charge; but, observing that, if not seen at the post of danger, the people of Hindostan would say she had grown cowardly in her old age, she pitched her tents in the neighbourhood of the head-quarter's camp, and carried her point so far as at least to have the honour of being present at the capture of the fortress.

The revenues of the Begum are estimated at ten lacs, or £100,000 sterling, and she is supposed to be in the possession of immense treasures amassed during a very long and prosperous life. The principality of which she is the sovereign is about twenty miles long, twelve broad, and seventy in circumference. Her palace is built in the European fashion, and she has also erected a church there, after the model of St. Peter's at Rome. Both the design and execution of this cathedral are very beautiful; the altar of white marble, brought from Jyepore, and inlaid with cornelians and agates of various colours, being particularly rich and splendid. The gardens at Seerdhuna are celebrated for their fruit-trees, and especially for the groves of oranges,

lemons, and citrons, which perfume the air with their blossoms, and weigh down the branches with their golden treasures.

The Begum also possesses a mansion at Delhi, which was formerly her favourite place of residence; it is situated at the upper end of the Chaudry Chowk, and crowns an eminence in the centre of a spacious and stately garden, laid out according to the prevailing fashion of the East. Its parterres are thickly planted with the choicest fruits and flowers, and it is traversed by avenues of superb cypresses, whose luxuriant though melancholy beauty atones for the formality of their appearance. During the period of Lord Lake's sojourn at Delhi, and for many subsequent years, the Begum was wont to give superb entertainments, and to receive the highest marks of respect from her European visitors. She has probably been a little spoiled by flattery, and has acquired rather too inflated a notion of her own political importance, since it is said that, on her excursions to Delhi, during the latter years of her life, she did not pay the usual tribute of homage to the resident, of a visit, which, as the representative of the British Government, he has a right to expect from all persons of inferior rank.

The omission, in process of time, was reported to the supreme authorities at Calcutta, and the Begum, duly admonished, proceeded in form to the residency, though with a very ill-grace. In fact, her pride was so deeply hurt by this enforced concession, that she speedily turned her back upon Delhi, declaring at her departure that she would never enter its walls again. She has kept her word, residing at places in which her dignity is not lowered by the presence of so high a functionary. Her palace at Seerdhuna is under the same ban, though not from the same cause. Some of her astrologers have predicted that her return will be marked by her death; and, though long past the usual period of existence, she has not the least desire to be gathered to her forefathers, and, in avoiding the fatal spot, hopes to retard her doom. She is building a house at Kinwah, about eleven miles distant from the capital of her fief, and possesses one at Bhurtpore, and another in the neighbourhood of Meerut, outside the cantonments, which is now her principal residence. Here she gives splendid entertainments, particularly to the great personages who travel in that direction. She has long since abandoned the restrictions imposed by Asiatic prejudice, and sits at table with

large parties of gentlemen without scruple. She formerly attended to the Mohammedan precepts as far as they related to the preparation of food; but, having once passed the rubicon, she refused to return to her trammels again, not even following the example of the English ladies, when they retired from table, but preferring to remain with the gentlemen, on the plea that she made it a point never to leave her "pipe half-smoked."

The dress of the Begum differs in some degree from that of other Hindostanee ladies, her highness choosing to substitute a turban for the veil invariably worn by the females of her country; a circumstance which, though apparently trifling, shews that she entertains little or no regard for native opinions and prejudices, the turban being only assumed by dancing-girls during some performances which are considered highly indecorous, and are not exhibited before ladies. The Begum's costume usually consists of a short full petticoat of rich stuff, which displays a few inches of her gold or silver brocaded trowsers. The *coortee* and under-garment are similar to those worn by other ladies, and she throws a shawl over her turban, which envelops her throat, arms, and shoulders, in the muffling though not ungraceful manner in

which the veil is worn in India. Her slippers are as bright and as small as those of Cinderella, and notwithstanding the near approach of her eightieth year, are displayed with a considerable degree of coquetry. She smokes out of a magnificent hookah, and upon most occasions is decorated with a prodigious quantity of jewels.

The property of every kind, which this fortunate adventurer has accumulated, is immense; her stud of horses is one of the finest in Hindostan, and she drives about in a carriage-and-four of English fashion and Calcutta build, which boasts, or at least did boast when it was first launched, a high degree of splendour. It is a large, bright-yellow coach, with silver mouldings, the window-frames of solid silver, and the lace and hangings, which are very rich and substantial, also of silver, with splendid bullion tassels; the lining is of violet-coloured satin, embroided all over with silver stars, and the postillions are in dark blue and silver liveries.

The Begum, during her latter years, has frequently sat for her portrait to a native artist, who takes excellent likenesses, and having had the advantage of European instruction, has made considerable progress in the art. One of these, a minia-

ture, is in the possession of Lord Combermere, for whom her highness professed the warmest degree of friendship. In former days, our Indian Catherine was distinguished for elegance and grace; and whenever she had a point to carry, she employed such captivating and fascinating arts, that she seldom failed to succeed. She does not speak any language except Hindoostanee, and her increasing years and infirmities have reduced the beautiful and dignified heroine of a thousand fields, to a decrepid old woman, who is still, however, courteous and polite, and not insensible to the homage formerly so freely rendered, but which now seems only to proceed from a sentiment of pity, or a love of the ridiculous.

Unhappily, the character of the Begum is stained with cruelties of so deep a dye, that respect for her talents is merged in abhorrence for her crimes. The natives say, that she was born a politician, that she has allies every where, and friends no where, and there is much truth in these assertions: for, though liberal to her dependants, she is accounted a severe mistress, and, before the occupation of the neighbouring provinces by the British Government, did not scruple to commit atrocities of the most frightful nature. The darkest stories are

circulated of murders perpetrated by her order, and in her own presence; some of her subjects she is said to have impaled alive, and others barbarously mutilated. But the most shocking tale is connected with a fertile cause of female cruelty and revenge. She became jealous of one of the females of her household, and, not satisfied with depriving her of existence, prolonged her sufferings and rejoiced over them with a savage barbarity, which can only be compared to the sanguine ferocity of the tigress, tearing and torturing her prey before she gives it the final stroke. The unfortunate girl was buried alive under the floor of the apartment occupied by her mistress, who slept upon the spot in order to feast her ears with the dying groans of her victim, and to prevent the possibility of a rescue; the whole establishment compassionating the fate of the hapless creature who had fallen under the clutch of so relentless a monster.

The seclusion in which Hindoostanee women are obliged to live is not favourable to the formation of the female character, nor does it tend to soften and improve the heart. Women of strong feelings, for want of other excitement, are apt to exercise the most wanton cruelties upon their dependants, and the zenana is frequently a scene of the greatest

misery. The slave-girls of the princesses of Delhi have been known to escape from the palace and fly to the British residency for protection; and surrounded by such examples, and armed with absolute power, it is not surprising that a woman of so determined a character as the Begum Sumroo should have exceeded all her cotemporaries in the recklessness with which she indulged her hatred against those who had the misfortune to offend her.

The Begum's first husband, the founder of her fortunes, is buried at Agra. She, herself, is said never to have had a child! But the son, mentioned as the successor to the *jaghire*, of whom nothing in India seems to be known, certainly left some offspring, who have formed alliances with Europeans and Indo-Britons. The Calcutta papers, of October 1831, announced the marriages of two gentlemen, John Rose Troup, Esq., and Monsieur Peter Paul Mari Le Caroli, with the daughters of Colonel George Alexander Dyce, great grand-daughters of the Begum Sumroo. The ceremony was performed in the cathedral of Sancta Maria, at Seerdhuna, by the padre Julius Cæsar, and that of Mr. Troup was afterwards celebrated a second time at the Begum's palace, by the protestant chaplain of Meerut.

Several priests of the Roman Catholic persuasion

are settled at Seerdhuna, and their influence over the Begum, which is said to be very considerable, will, it is to be hoped, lead to a deeper sense of her misdeeds than that self-satisfied old lady appears at present to entertain. She could scarcely be in better hands than those of father Julius Cæsar, who realizes the most beautiful ideas which could be formed of a Christian minister. Destitute of ambitious hopes, and debarred from those ties of kindred and affection which tend to reconcile the protestant clergy to a residence on a foreign shore, he devotes all his time and thoughts to the preservation and enlargement of his little flock. Though occasionally to be found at Seerdhuna and other places where a Catholic community is assembled, his residence is in the city of Patna, where he has a small congregation. He is the only European who has ever taken up his abode within the walls since the cold-blooded massacre which took place in 1764, and he is universally respected by the natives, who regard with great veneration those persons belonging to the priesthood who act up to their clerical profession, whatever their religious opinions may be.

In times of expected irritation or tumult, the services of the padre are frequently called for in aid

of the civil authorities, and he is always ready to employ his influence in the promotion of any good work. His talents and amiable character render him a welcome and an honoured guest at the houses of the British residents at Bankipore, a civil station in his immediate neighbourhood; and Bishop Heber seems scarcely to have done justice to this excellent man, in ascribing his popularity to the smoothness of his manners and his tact in administering to the self-love of his associates. Father Julius Cæsar is a Franciscan friar, wearing the garb and practising the self-dénial enjoined by his order, the products of his little cure being barely adequate to the support of a very humble establishment.

The Begum's court at Seerdhuna has been the asylum of European adventurers of various ranks, who, disappointed of the golden harvest which they had hoped to reap in the fertile fields of India, have been content to sit down for the remainder of their lives upon appointments which gave them more luxuries than they could command at home. Forming connexions with Asiatic women, or giving their children wholly up to the care of the natives, Seerdhuna has exhibited Europeans in a very singular position, having nothing of their father-land about them save the hue of their skin. Some English

gentlemen, sitting at table at Agra, were surprised by the appearance of a man, whose fair complexion, sandy whiskers, and peculiar physiognomy, announced him to belong to the Emerald Isle, but whose dress and language were purely Hindoostanee. With all the native volubility, he told the story of his wrongs, his unjust dismissal from the Begum's service, and his travels in search of redress or employment. Upon being questioned upon the subject of his parentage, he said that his father was an Irishman, but seemed to know nothing farther about the matter, and to be perfectly unaware of the astonishment which his Asiatic manners and habits would occasion to those with whom he was conversing. It is very seldom that transplantation to a foreign soil produces so complete a change in the immediate descendants of British exiles, though other Europeans, French people in particular, accommodate themselves more easily to the customs and usages of the people with whom they are destined to live. Some of the most respectable of the Begum's foreign retainers have been natives of France; her colonel-commandant, a gentleman named Peton, who resided at her court during a great many years, was very justly esteemed for his invariable good conduct and gentlemanly manners. Latterly, her

service has fallen into disrepute; as the country has become tranquillized, the prospects of Europeans at native courts have become less brilliant, and as her highness does not offer very high emoluments, and there is no honour whatever to be gained in her employ, she is surrounded by half-castes, whose expectations are of a very limited nature, and who submit to treatment which would disgust persons of higher pretensions.

Either according to treaty, or in consequence of the Begum's gratitude for the protection she has experienced, she has made the British Government her heir, and, at her death, which in the course of nature must take place very shortly, the *jaghire* will be placed on the same footing as those under the Company's jurisdiction. The Begum is very liberal in her donations to public charities, and other popular institutions in Calcutta. After the death of her husband Sumroo, she kept up a monastery founded by him at Agra, for persons belonging to the Roman Catholic Church, of any country or nation, adding an establishment for nuns; but whether many persons of either sex have availed themselves of this asylum we have little opportunity of knowing, since European travellers pass through Agra without taking the

slightest interest in any of its minor features, and the greater number are quite content with casting a listless glance upon the buildings of note which are to be seen in the fort and the cantonments.

The Begum exercises the almost boundless hospitality which native custom has prescribed to those who are placed at the head of a fief or large estate, entertaining the whole of the servants and camp-followers of parties of travellers, to whom she is desirous to pay respect and attention. The supply of firewood, ghee, grain, and sweetmeats, to the multifarious attendants of the ambulatory establishment of a great man, is a serious affair; but her highness always does the thing handsomely, and the people who are feasted at her expense have no cause to complain of the meagreness of their fare. Salutes of cannon are fired, and her troops are turned out, whenever her capital is visited by travellers of distinction, and while the retainers are furnished with the materials for a feast, the ladies and gentlemen are invited to her own table, sumptuously covered at breakfast and dinner, the banquet being followed by *nautching* and fire-works.

CHAPTER VI.

DELHI.

THERE is no place in British India which the intellectual traveller approaches with feelings more strongly excited than the ancient seat of the Mogul empire. The proud towers of Delhi, with its venerable reliques of Hindoo architecture, its splendid monuments of Moslem power, and its striking indications of Christian supremacy, cannot fail to impress the mind with sensations of mingled awe, wonder, and delight. In no other part of our Eastern possessions do the natives shew so earnest a desire to imitate European fashions; and though, at present, the mixture, in which convenience more than elegance is consulted, produces a grotesque effect, the total overthrow of many Oriental prejudices may be safely predicted from the tolerance of all sorts of innovations manifested at Delhi.

The modern capital of the Moslem kings, which is called by the natives *Shahjehanabad*, stands in the centre of a sandy plain, surrounded on every

side with the ruins of old Delhi, curiously contrasted with a new suburb, the villas belonging to Europeans attached to the residency, and with the cantonments lately erected for three regiments of sepoys. The celebrated gardens of Shalimer, with their cypress avenues, sparkling fountains, roseate bowers, and the delicious shade of their dark cedars, on which Shah Jehan, the most tasteful monarch in the world, is said to have lavished a *crore* of rupees (a million sterling), have been almost wholly surrendered to waste and desolation; the ravages of the Mahrattas have left few wrecks behind, and amidst these arise the palaces of the Christian rulers of the soil. A favourite retreat of Sir Charles Metcalfe, afterwards inhabited by Sir David Ochterlony, arrests the stranger's eye, as he seeks in vain to recognize, from the description handed down to us, the paradise of flowers and foliage which once adorned these arid tracts.

From the road which, it is said, formerly extended to Lahore, shaded all the way by the meeting branches of the mango trees, of which not a bough remains, the military cantonments appear, couched under a ridge of sand-stone rocks, called *Mejnoon Pahar:* some writers have likened this military array to an army in ambuscade, and the

rocky screen favours the idea. The loss of the rich umbrageous foliage of the tamarinds and cedars of Shah Jehan has been inadequately supplied by a foreign introduction before noticed, the *Parkinsonias*, which thrive in an arid soil, but which require the relief of leaves to soften the effect of their gaudy blossoms. They are, when planted in groups, quite as offensive to the eye as a grove entirely composed of laburnums in full flower would be; yet, in the cantonments of Delhi and of Agra, little else is to be seen.

Modern Delhi, or Shahjehanabad, is enclosed by a splendid rampart of red granite, and entered by gateways the most magnificent which the world can boast. The walls were formerly so lofty as to conceal all save the highest towers; but these dead blanks, with their flanking turrets, like the eyries of the eagle, high in air, have been exchanged for low ramparts strengthened by massive bastions. From the outside the view is splendid; domes and mosques, cupolas and minarets, with the imperial palace frowning like a mountain of red granite, appear in the midst of groves of clustering trees, so thickly planted that the buildings have been compared, in Oriental imagery, to rocks of pearls and rubies, rising from an emerald sea. In approach-

ing the city from the east bank of the Jumna, the prospect realizes all that the imagination has pictured of Oriental magnificence; mosques and minarets glittering in the sun, some garlanded with wild creepers, others arrayed in all the pomp of gold, the exterior of the cupolas being covered with brilliant metal, and from Mount Mejnoon, over which a fine road now passes, the shining waters of the Jumna gleaming in the distance, insulating Selimgurh, and disappearing behind the halls of the peacock-throne, the palace of the emperors, add another beautiful feature to the scene. It is well known that the line, quoted by Mr. Moore, in *Lalla Rookh*,—

> Oh! if there be an Elysium on earth,
> It is this, it is this!—

is to be found in the audience-chamber of the King of Delhi; and though the glory of the Moghuls has faded away, and their greatness departed, the superb edifices and luxuriant gardens of this splendid capital would still render it an Eden of delight, were it not for one terrible drawback, the besetting sin of all Indian cities,—dust. In Delhi, this plague is suffocating, choking, stifling, blinding, smothering,—in fact, perfectly unbearable. The visitors see all they can see in as short a time as

possible, and hasten away to some retreat, where the parched and thirsty ground is watered, and where they may respire freely, without being forced to inhale some ounces of commingled sand and dirt whenever they venture to open their lips.

The Chandery Choke, or principal street, is wide and handsome, one of the broadest avenues to be found in an Indian city. The houses are of various styles of architecture, partaking occasionally of the prevailing fashions of the west; Grecian piazzas, porticos, and pediments, are not unfrequently found fronting the dwellings of the Moslem or Hindoo; balconies are, of course, very common, and form the favourite resort of the gentlemen of the family, who, in a loose deshabille of white muslin, enjoy the pleasures of the *hookah*, while gazing on the passing crowd below, totally regardless of the dust which fills the air.

The shops are crowded with all sorts of European products and manufactures, and many of them display sign-boards, on which the names and occupations of the inhabitants are emblazoned in Roman characters—a novel circumstance in a native city. The introduction of this useful custom is attributed to Burruddeen Khan, an ingenious person patronized by the reigning emperor, Akbar the

second. This accomplished artist is celebrated for his seal-engravings, and so much delighted his royal master by the specimens he produced, in cutting gems with the letters and devices of all nations, that he raised him to the rank of a noble, one of the few privileges still enjoyed by this shadow of a king. The English placards have a very curious appearance, mingled with the striped purdahs or curtains, which, in many instances, supply the place of doors, and the variegated screens, (where animals of blue, red, or yellow, sprawl upon a green ground) which shade the windows. The houses are, for the most part, white-washed, and the gaiety of their appearance is heightened by the carpets and shawls, strips of cloth of every hue, scarfs and coloured veils, which are hung out over the verandah or on the tops of houses to air, the sun in India being considered a great purifier, a dissipator of bad smells, and even a destroyer of vermin, though its claim to the latter quality must be equivocal.

The crowd of an Indian city, always picturesque, is here particularly rich in showy figures of men and animals; elephants, camels, and horses, gaily caparisoned, parade through the streets, jingling their silver ornaments, and the many-coloured tufts

and fringes with which they are adorned: the *suwarree* of a great personage sweeping along the highways, little scrupulous of the damage it may effect in its progress, forms a striking spectacle when it can be viewed from some safe corner or from the back of a tall elephant. The *coup d'œil* is magnificent; but to enter into details might destroy the illusion; for, mingled with mounted retainers, richly clothed, and armed with glittering helmets, polished spears, and shields knobbed with silver, crowds of wild-looking half-clad wretches on foot are to be seen, increasing the tumult and the dust, but adding nothing to the splendour of the cavalcade. No great man—and Delhi is full of personages of pretension,—ever passes along in state without having his titles shouted out by the stentorian lungs of some of his followers. The cries of the venders of different articles of food, the discordant songs of itinerant musicians, screamed out to the accompaniment of the tom-tom, with an occasional bass volunteered by a *chetah*, grumbling out in a sharp roar his annoyance at being hawked about the streets for sale, with the shrill distressful cry of the camel, the trumpetings of the elephants, the neighing of horses, and the grumbling of cart-wheels, are sounds which assail the ear from sun-

rise until sunset in the streets of Delhi. The multitude of equipages is exceedingly great, and more diversified, perhaps, than those of any other city in the world. English carriages, altered and improved to suit the climate and the peculiar taste of the possessor, are mingled with the palanquins and bullock-carts, open and covered, the chairs, and the cage-like and lanthorn-like conveyances, of native construction. Prince Baber, the second surviving son of the reigning monarch, drives about in an English chariot drawn by eight horses, in which he frequently appears attired in the full-dress uniform of a British general officer, rendered still more striking by having each breast adorned with the grand cross of the Bath. Mirza Salem, another of the princes of the imperial family, escorts a favourite wife in a carriage of the same description; the lady is said to be very beautiful, but the blinds are too closely shut to allow the anxious crowd a glimpse of her charms. Regular English coaches, drawn by four horses, and driven by postillions, the property of rich natives, appear on the public drives and at reviews; and occasionally a buggy or cabriolet of a very splendid description may be seen, having the hood of black velvet, embroidered with gold. The *chetahs*

and hunting-leopards, before-mentioned, are led hooded through the streets; birds in cages, Persian cats, and Persian greyhounds are also exposed in the streets for sale, under the superintendence of some of those fine, tall, splendid-looking men, who bring all sorts of merchandize from Cashmere, Persia, and Thibet to the cities of Hindostan—an almost gigantic race, bearing a noble aspect in spite of the squalidness of their attire, and having dark, clear complexions, without a tinge of swarthiness. Beggars in plenty infest the streets; and, in addition to the multitudes brought together by business, there are idle groups of loungers —Mussulmans of lazy, dissipated, depraved habits, gaudily decked out in flaunting colours, with their hair frizzled in a bush from under a glittering skull-cap, stuck rakishly at the side of the head.

Such are a few of the distinguishing features of Chandery Choke, which abounds in hardware, cloth, *pāān*, and pastry-cooks' shops, the business, as usual, carried on in the open air, with all the chaffering, haggling, and noise common to Asiatic dealings. How any thing of the kind is managed, amidst the bustle and confusion of the streets, the throng of bullock-carts, the strings of loaded camels, the squadrons of wild, vicious horses, the

trains of elephants, and the insolent retainers of great men, only intent upon displaying their own and their master's consequence, by increasing the uproar, seems astonishing. The natives of India form an extraordinary compound of apathy and vivacity. In the midst of noises and tumult, which would stun or distract the most iron-nerved European in the world, they will maintain an imperturbable calmness; while, in ordinary matters, where there appears to be nothing to disturb their equanimity, they will vociferate and gesticulate as if noise and commotion were absolutely essential to their happiness. By a very little attention to order and comfort, the Chandery Choke might be rendered one of the most delightful promenades in the world; the famous canal of Delhi, shaded by fine trees, runs down the centre, and nothing could be more easy than to allay the clouds of dust, at present so intolerable, by keeping the avenues on either side well watered.

This canal, originally the work of Feroze Shah, forms the only supply of wholesome water which the inhabitants of Delhi are enabled to obtain. Sharing the fate of the Patan empire, it became neglected, and was at length wholly choked up, remaining in this state for more than a hundred

years. The canal was re-opened by Ali Merdan Khan, a Persian nobleman attached to the court of the Emperor Shah Jehan, but was again dried up and remained useless until the establishment of the British government; which, anxious to display its paternal care, and wishing to confer a solid and lasting benefit upon the people of the city, determined upon repairing this splendid work. An undertaking of such magnitude occupied a considerable period; it required three years of unremitting labour to complete it, and the expense was enormous. At length, in 1820, during the administration of Sir Charles Metcalfe, the whole was finished. All the inhabitants of the city, in a tumult of joy, went out to greet the approaching waters, shouting *Io-peans* to the government which gave them the long-desired blessing, and casting garlands of flowers, ghee, oil, and spices, into the stream refreshing their eyes, and giving such welcome promises of fertility and abundance. Fortunately, the present rulers of India are persevering as well as enterprising; for, in the course of a very few years, the canal again became dry, in consequence of a change in the channel of the Jumma, whose waters, flowing through another passage, no longer afforded the customary supply. The inhabitants

of Delhi, with the usual Asiatic absence of foresight, had neglected the wells, which, previous to the opening of the canal, had furnished them, though inadequately, with the precious element. The expense of obtaining water for domestic purposes was heavy, and to many almost ruinous; the gardens became deserts, and the failure of the rains increased the distress. The sufferings thus occasioned were not of long duration; as soon as it was practicable, the engineer officer having the charge of the canal repaired the mischief, and a second jubilee took place, attended by similar festivals and similar thanksgivings, than which nothing could have been more gratifying to the English inhabitants of the imperial city.

The palace of the residency, within the walls of modern Delhi or Shahjehanabad, formerly belonged to Ali Mardan Khan, the nobleman beforementioned. It is a large irregular building, which has been added to, and altered to suit the taste and convenience of its successive owners, the banqueting-rooms being the work of Sir David Ochterlony; some of the older apartments are adorned with elaborate ornaments, and rich Mosaic paintings; it has a large garden at the back, laid out with the stately formality which is the usual style of Orien-

tal pleasure-grounds, and the whole, though not particularly spendid, has a solemn and imposing air.

By strangers visiting Delhi, a presentation at the court of the fallen monarch is generally desired, though there are many Anglo-Indians who, with more than native apathy, pass through the city of the Moslem conquerors of India with as little interest in the great Moghul as they have been accustomed to take in his effigy, which is so unaccountably impressed upon a pack of cards. The imperial palace, erected by Shah Jehan, is a very noble building. The outer wall in front is sixty feet high, battlemented on the top, and adorned with small round towers; the gateways are magnificent. The whole is of red granite, surrounded by a moat, and, though only tenable against arrows and musquetry, has an air of strength and grandeur. The entrance is exceedingly fine; a lofty gothic arch, in the centre of the tower, which forms the portal, leads to a splendid vestibule, and through a vaulted colonnade, to the inner court. A second gateway leads to another quadrangle, in which the *dewanee khas*, or hall of audience, is situated. The throne or pavilion of the great Moghul is of white marble, beautifully carved, inlaid with gold,

and of curious construction. The roof, which was formerly vaulted with silver, is supported on richly decorated pillars; around the cornice is the celebrated inscription, "If there be a paradise upon earth, it is this, it is this!" The throne of marble, embellished with gilded ornaments, stands in the centre of this pavilion; it rises about three feet from the floor, and is canopied by a drapery of cloth of gold, bordered with seed-pearl; there are no steps in front, the monarch entering from the rear, with his sons and favoured courtiers, and the rest of the assemblage standing round on the pavement beneath. The quadrangle, in which this singular edifice is placed, is extremely handsome, surrounded by profusely-ornamented buildings, and adorned with flowers and fountains. The king is seated, cross-legged, upon cushions, and, except upon occasions of state, does not affect great splendour of attire, being frequently entirely wrapped up in shawls, and shewing only a few valuable jewels to the eager eyes of European strangers. The court is, in fact, shorn of all its grandeur, and the monarch, painfully conscious of his own degradation, can only be reconciled to the exhibition of himself, for the sake of the revenue afforded by the gold mohurs, which are offered as *nuzzurs* at every presentation.

The whole ceremonial of the reception at this once all-powerful court has dwindled away to a mere farce. Formerly, the distribution of the *khillauts*, or dresses of honour, was an affair of the greatest importance, and may, probably, still be considered so by the natives, amongst whom the dependent king yet maintains the shadow of his power. The personal rank and the degree of estimation in which the person receiving the gift is held, are decided by the number of articles and the value of the materials composing the khillaut: swords, with embroidered belts, the hilts and scabbards being of embossed silver, or set with precious stones, shields rimmed with silver, daggers richly ornamented, splendid turbans, shawls in pairs, cummerbunds and handkerchiefs, gold and silver muslins, Benares brocades, strings of pearls and other jewels, are comprehended in the *khillauts* given to the favourites whom native monarchs delight to honour. Sometimes, these rich gifts will consist of a hundred and one articles; seventy-five is a more common, and five the lowest number; these last are always of inferior quality: the greater the quantity the more rich the materials, so that the cost and value may be calculated by the number bestowed. The investiture of *khillauts* takes place

in the king's presence, who, when desirous of paying a mark of peculiar respect, places a turban on the head of the favoured person; on other occasions, he merely touches the articles with his hand, and the rest of the ceremony is left to the officers of state. These magnificent presents are not wholly disinterested marks of sovereign beneficence: the individual who receives them is always expected to make an adequate return, and to present a *nuzzur* corresponding with his rank and the value of the kingly gift.

The *khillauts* presented at Delhi to the European visitants of the court are the merest frippery imaginable, and are said, with some appearance of truth, to be manufactured from the cast-off finery of the ladies of the *zenana:* wreaths of tinsel flowers, coarse silvered muslin, and still coarser shawls, with girdles and gewgaws of the most trumpery description, dear at the price of the few gold *mohurs* which are paid for them, are graciously bestowed upon the civil and military officers of the Company, who are required to masquerade in this barbarous finery, which is put on, or rather hung on, over their ordinary attire. An officer in full uniform, with a silver muslin tunic dangling from his shoulders, or arrayed in a robe of flowered

gauze stuck with tinsel and edged with faded ribbons, a flimsy scarf fluttering from his cocked hat, or a tiara of false stones encircling the plain round beaver of a civilian, are objects continually offered to the view of spectators, who must have very rigid countenances not to betray the ridicule which they excite. The custom now would be "more honoured in the breach than in the observance," it having become nothing more than a very absurd piece of formality, rendered as cheap as possible, in order to suit the purses of those who wish to make their salaam to the king. On visits of state, by functionaries of rank in the service, the expenses are paid by the Government; to private individuals repairing alone to the hall of audience, the cost is four gold *mohurs*, about eight pounds, not including a *khillaut*, which is only given on particular occasions, and forms an extra expense.

The court of Delhi is still a place of considerable political intrigue; the numerous native tributaries to the British Government have always points of great importance to themselves to settle, which they endeavour to obtain by those crooked paths of diplomacy which Asiatics delight to tread; and persons attached to the residency, from the highest to the lowest, are, directly or indirectly, assailed by

stimulants supposed to be all-powerful over every part of the East. The trade of Delhi is very extensive, particularly in shawls, for which it is a grand mart; a constant intercourse is kept up between this city and Cashmere, whence the splendid fabrics so much prized all over the civilized world are brought in immense quantities—some plain, to have borders sewed upon them, others to be embroidered in silk or gold, whence they derive the name of Delhi shawls. Nothing can exceed the beauty of the Delhi needle-work, which is in the highest esteem throughout Asia, and eagerly coveted by the rich of both sexes, the *caftans* of the men being often of velvet edged with rich embroidery. The goldsmiths are also celebrated beyond those of any other Indian city, and eminently merit their high reputation. It is difficult for persons, well acquainted with the *chef-d'œuvres* of European artisans, to imagine the surprising beauty of the Delhi work—the *champac* necklaces in particular, so called from the flower whose petals it resembles. They do not succeed so well in cutting and arranging precious stones, though they are improving very fast from the instructions native workmen now obtain when in the employment of English jewellers at Calcutta. There are a great many carvers of

stone and ivory in Delhi, but they have not attained to any thing approaching perfection in their art. A new and curious branch of Indian *bijouterie* has, however, sprung up, under the auspices of an English lady; it consists of ivory medallions, on which the principal buildings of the neighbourhood, the Kootub Minar, &c., are very delicately painted; these are set in gold, and worn as necklaces, or sent as presents by the fair portion of the European community, and, though not of much value, are both curious and ornamental.

The gratifications afforded by Delhi, as a station for Europeans, must depend entirely upon the tastes and pursuits of those to whom the chances of the service have made it a temporary abode; for, with the exception of a few persons, whose appointments may be considered to be fixed for life, a constant change is taking place in the society. The number of Europeans is not very great; and the amazing superiority in rank and station, possessed by the civilians over the military, produces a jealousy exceedingly inimical to social intercourse. A dearth of unmarried ladies is frequently a subject of complaint, and when this happens at a period in which no stranger of rank is a visitant to the imperial city, gaities of every kind are in a state of suspension.

Whenever any great person is passing through Delhi, the residency is always a scene of festivity to those who have not excluded themselves from its hospitalities through a dread of compromising their dignity by appearing to court the ruling powers, a prejudice which is the bane of society in India, and unfortunately fostered by the folly of a few vain-glorious civilians, who, however, form a very small proportion of the whole body. In a place like Delhi, where natives of rank fancy they consult their own interest in administering to the pride and vanity of their European rulers, a pompous, ostentatious official is rendered unbearable to all save the train of parasites such personages will always have about them. The entertainments given by the Resident are usually of a very magnificent description; the gardens are illuminated by coloured lamps, and the banquets have all the abundance considered so essential to splendour by the native purveyors.

Moosulman gentlemen of rank frequently give parties to the European visitants at Delhi, in which ladies are included, and at these, the *nautch* or dancing-girls are invariably introduced: the *prima donna*, named Alfina, is a very celebrated *artiste*, outscreaming all her contemporaries, and keeping

possession of the floor when vainly-aspiring rivals are desired to sit down. Sometimes five or six sets of these inharmonious vocalists appear together, all singing at the same time, after the fashion of a Dutch chorus, the natives not having an idea of making their voices accord with each other. The dancing, though not equally barbarous, is exceedingly tiresome, when, as in the presence of ladies, it is circumscribed within the bounds of propriety; but there are some European gentlemen who acquire the native taste for an exhibition which, when addressed to male eyes alone, is said to be not particularly decorous.

The horror with which even those Asiatics who adopt foreign fashions in equipages and household furniture regard the manners and customs of the Europeans brought in close contact with them, is sometimes openly displayed by urgent remonstrances to those for whom they have contracted a friendship; but this is nothing, compared to the expression of their disgust in private. In Delhi, the opinions entertained upon the subject are widely, though secretly, circulated through the medium of the native *ukhbars*, scandalous chronicles, very much resembling a few of our English newspapers, except that they are in manuscript:

the language is Persian, and the editors do not scruple to write at full length the names of those who are the subjects of the most atrocious libels. It is not very easy for an European to procure a sight of the animadversions passed upon the conduct of himself or his friends; some artifice is requisite to obtain samples of the method employed to amuse the reading portion of the native community at the expense of persons differing so widely in the habits of their public and private life. As the writers are not very scrupulous in the language they use, there is not a little difficulty in making an extract, which will display the spririt of their comments, without shocking the eye by coarseness of expression. The following description of a European entertainment will convey some idea of the estimation in which such promiscuous meetings are held.

"The *gentlemen of exalted dignity* had a great feast last night, to which all the military chiefs and lieutenants were invited. There was a little hog on the table, before Mr. ——, who cut it in small pieces, and sent some to each of the party; even the women ate of it. In their language, a pig is called *ham*. Having stuffed themselves with the unclean food, and many sorts of flesh, taking plenty

of wine, they made for some time a great noise, which doubtless arose from drunkenness. They all stood up two or four times, crying 'hip! hip!' and roared before they drank more wine. After dinner, they danced in their licentious manner, pulling about each other's wives." Here follows a bit of personal scandal: "Captain ——, who is staying with Mr. ——, went away with the latter's lady (arm-in-arm), the palanquins following behind, and they proceeded by themselves into the bungalow: the wittol remained at table, guzzling red wine." The uncourteous, ungracious manner, which too many Englishmen assume towards the natives, is touched off with truth and spirit in the following paragraph: "The Government has manifested singular want of sense in appointing Mr. —— to be —— at ——. The man is a capricious blockhead, and very hot-tempered; he can do no business himself, yet he has the extreme folly to be angry when abler persons wish to do it for him. When the most respectable Hindoostanee gentlemen waited upon him yesterday, he just stood up, half-dressed, when they salaamed, and said, 'well, what do you want?' And when they answered 'only to pay our respects,' he growled out '*jow*' (go)." This sort of rudeness

is, indeed, but too common, and seems to excite the native ire as much as dancing, wine-bibbing, and eating the flesh of pigs. Even the highest person in the state is not exempt from the lampoons of these purveyors of scandal, as the following extract will attest: "The European king and his viziers, having heard that the Governor-general is a fool, exceedingly slack in managing affairs, he is to be recalled, and a clever lord sent out to save Bengal."

Native opinion is held in great scorn, and set at defiance by the European residents of India, who, with the solitary exception of a few, refusing to eat pork, out of deference to the prevailing prejudice, indulge themselves in every thing that appears to be most hateful to the surrounding multitude. But the excesses of which they are guilty would be excused or overlooked, were they more anxious to make themselves popular by affability and kindness of demeanour. In India, public admiration is not an evanescent feeling, or liable to the mutations which attend it in Europe. The people of Hindostan have no caprice in their affections, nor do they forget the benefits they have received. Instances have been known at Delhi of natives flocking to condole with a Resident on his

disgrace by the British Government, notwithstanding their hopes and expectations from his favour were at an end. And yet many persons, who have never for a single instant endeavoured to conciliate the people over whom they have been placed in authority, with power to render them happy, by accepting their services or courtesies with corresponding kindness, are loud in their invectives against native insincerity and ingratitude. It is precisely those, whose pride and insolence have rendered them objects of dislike, who thus animadvert upon the character of the people of Hindostan.

Delhi is considered to be one of the hottest places in India, owing probably to the arid nature of the country all around it, the immense quantity of buildings, which become so many reflectors, and the exceeding fury of the fiery *simoom*, which blows until ten o'clock at night, and sometimes does not subside during the twenty-four hours. This kind of weather lasts four months, and European residents must content themselves with in-door amusements for the whole period of its duration.

The rains and the cold season are both very agreeable; but there is one plague from which the city and its environs never are exempt,—that of

flies,—which come in armies similar to those which invaded Egypt in the time of Pharoah. In addition to the usual number of *chicks*, the blinds with which the doors and windows of English houses are furnished, the outer verandahs are carefully closed in with this pretty and useful manufacture of split bamboo, to secure the interiors from the hosts of winged enemies which would otherwise pervade the whole atmosphere. Persons living in tents, in the cold weather, are almost driven mad by the torments inflicted by these disgusting assailants. The natives wrap themselves up in a cloth, and lie down, preferring the chances of suffocation, as the lesser evil of the two; but the European must either submit to the constant attendance of a domestic, with a *chowrie*, to beat them off, or arm himself with patience to endure.

These, however, and other inflictions of the climate, are amply compensated by the endless gratification afforded to intellectual minds by the number of interesting objects which greet the spectator on every side. A life might be spent in rambling over the ruins of old Delhi, and subjects for contemplation still remain. Next to the palace, the most striking building of Shahjehanabad is the *Jumma Musjid*, a magnificent mosque, erected on

the summit of a rock of considerable height, ascended by three fine flights of steps. Three handsome gateways lead into a quadrangle of the noblest dimensions, paved with granite, inlaid with marble, and surrounded on three sides by an open cloister. Along this splendid area, which has a marble tank or reservoir of water in the centre, the visitor is conducted to another flight of steps, the ascent to the mosque, a superb hall, flanked with minarets, and entered by three lofty gothic arches crowned with marble domes. From the interstices of the piazza of this fine square, very picturesque views are obtained; it has not the delicacy of finish of the pearl mosque at Agra, but its proportions are much finer, and its situation, upon so commanding an eminence, gives it a great advantage over other celebrated Moghul temples. The Jumma Musjid was the work of Aurungzebe, who, like many other usurpers, endeavoured to gain a reputation for piety; and the better to impose upon a credulous multitude, who might have attributed his desire to gain the throne, by the imprisonment of his father and the murder of his brothers, to ambitious motives, clothed himself in the rags of a *faqueer*, and in this humble guise sought the shrine of the Jumma Musjid, to pray for the success of his rebellious

army. This mosque is kept in good repair by a grant of the English Government; it is much frequented by the faithful, of whom many hundreds may be seen at a time, prostrate on the pavement. It is also the resort of numerous beggars, and the poorer classes of travellers, who find all the shelter which the climate renders necessary in the nooks and recesses of the building.

There are other mosques which, from their antiquity or the historical circumstances connected with them, excite a good deal of curiosity; and the new suburb, called, after its projector, *Trevelyanpore*, under the village of Paharee, built to supply habitations for the increasing population of the city, is sufficiently interesting to attract a visit from strangers. The plan has been much approved for its elegant simplicity, though of course there are divers opinions concerning it. . The centre, a large quadrangle, called Bentinck Square, is entered by four streets, opening from the middle of each side, and not at the angles, according to the usual European custom. The whole extent of the streets, which are ninety feet in width, and the *façade* of the square, present an unbroken front of Doric columns, supporting a piazza behind, in which are commodious shops and dwelling-houses, ranged with

great regularity. The four triangular spaces at the back, formed by the arms of the cross, are intended for stable and court-yards for the cattle and bullock-carts belonging to the inhabitants. In the event of Trevelyanpore becoming a place of native resort, a plan for increasing its extent has been laid down, and a native gentleman of great wealth is constructing a magnificent gateway, of corresponding architecture, fronting the Lahore gate of Delhi, which will lead to a circus, the centre of which is to be adorned with a cenotaph to the memory of a young British officer, a friend of Mr. Trevelyan, the founder of this new quarter, which has not yet, however, been much sought after as a residence by the native population.

The grand object of attraction, in the neighbourhood of Shahjehanabad, is the *Kootub Minar*, a magnificent tower, two hundred and forty-two feet in height, which rises in the midst of the ruins of old Delhi, at the distance of nine miles south of the modern city. It is not known by whom or for what purpose this splendid monument was erected; and conjecture, weary of a hopeless task, is now content to permit its origin to remain in obscurity. According to the general supposition, it was erected in the thirteenth century; but this is not certain, nor can

it be ascertained whether the founder was Moslem or Hindoo, though the majority of opinions inclines to the latter. The great architectural beauty of this wonderful building, the height of the column, supposed to exceed that of any other in the world, its amazing strength, the richness of the materials, and the magnificence and variety of its embellishments, combine to render it the surpassing wonder of a land abounding in buildings of the highest degree of splendour and interest. The extraordinary elegance and grandeur of this remarkable tower have preserved it from the ruin with which it has been lately threatened; the Government, anxious to preserve so valuable a relic of Indian antiquity, directed its restoration and repair,—a difficult and somewhat hazardous work, which has been admirably performed by Major Smith, of the engineers. From the summit, which is ascended by a spiral staircase, the view is of the most sublime description; a desert, covered with ruins full of awful beauty, surrounds it on all sides, watered by the snake-like Jumna, which winds its huge silvery folds along the crumbling remains of palaces and tombs. In the back-ground rises the dark lofty walls and frowning towers of an ancient fortress, the strong hold of the Pytaun chiefs; and the eye,

wandering over the stupendous and still beautiful fragments of former grandeur, rests at last upon the white and glittering mosques and minarets of the modern city, closing in the distance, and finely contrasting, by its luxuriant groves and richly flowering gardens, with the loneliness and desolation of the scene beneath. The tomb of the emperor Humayoon, the father of Acbar, a monarch pre-eminent in misfortune, but of whom some fine chivalric tales are told, stands at a short distance from the Kootab Minar; there are other mausoleums also of great beauty and splendour, amid which that of Sufter Jung, a fortunate military adventurer, is worthy of mention.

Another place of great interest in the neighbourhood is a gigantic astronomical observatory, supposed to be the work of Jey Sing, a Hindoo rajah, who flourished in the seventeenth century. The dial is still in good repair, a stupendous work, of which the gnomon, of solid masonry, is sixty feet high. It is not possible to convey any idea by description of these enormous instruments; but persons desirous to make themselves acquainted with them have only to consult the splendid and accurate views taken by Mr. Daniell.

The Pytaun fortress, which forms so conspicuous

an object from every terrace in the neighbourhood, constitutes another of the lions of old Delhi; the lapse of seven hundred years has done little towards the reduction of the solid walls and massive towers of this fine old place, which is now chiefly celebrated for its tank or *bowlee*, embosomed within high picturesque buildings, which rise from twenty to sixty feet above the surface of the water,—a place of delightful coolness in the hot season, the sun not shining upon it for more than three hours a-day. It is deep as well as dark, and in the cold weather immersion cannot be very agreeable; yet the idle parties of young men who frequent the spot, take perhaps greater delight in the exploits of a few poor creatures, who pick up a precarious subsistence by plunging into the flashing waters, than in more legitimate objects of interest. Some of these will venture, for the sake of a rupee, from a very perilous height, springing from the dome of a neighbouring mosque down to the abyss below, sixty or seventy feet, and disappearing frightfully, the waters resuming their tranquillity before these desperate adventurers can rise again to the surface. Of course, amongst Europeans, there will always be persons sufficiently inhuman to encourage these barbarous feats; the few intellectual pilgrims, who

wander amidst the wrecks of bygone splendour, must make up their minds to endure sights and scenes of the most incongruous nature:—pic-nic parties bivouacking in the tombs, and being entertained at their repasts by the performances of a set of *nautch* girls; young men amusing themselves with a game of quoits; and groups of flirting unimaginative women, speculating on the probabilities of getting up a quadrille.

CHAPTER VII.

HURDWAR AND JUGGURNAUT.

THESE celebrated places of Hindoo pilgrimage are, at peculiar periods of the year, highly attractive to European visitors, more particularly Hurdwar, which lies almost in the route of those who are travelling to or from the Himalaya; and which possesses, in addition to its other claims to notice, picturesque beauties which can scarcely be surpassed. It is at this hallowed spot that the sacred river, emerging from its mountain birthplace, enters upon the wide plains of Hindostan, a clear, beautiful, but rather shallow stream, and, though somewhat rapid, affording, at the period of the annual fair, no indications of the fury and velocity with which, during the rains, it pursues its headlong course until it meets the sea.

The town of Hurdwar, which is distinguished by a handsome range of buildings, backing an esplanade which runs along the bank of the river, occupies ground only partially cleared from the

neighbouring forest. The deep and dense woods of the terraie sweep down to the western suburb, uniting their verdant avenues to the arched gateways and pillared colonnades of the streets. The pass, or gorge, leading to the valley of the Dhoon, presents landscapes of almost incomparable beauty, while the splendid piles of mountains, rising in the back-ground, give a wild sublimity to the scene, which can scarcely fail to inspire with enthusiastic delight every breast not entirely indifferent to nature's wonders. We know not whether the fine bursts of scenery, which greet the eye at every point, have any part in the attachment manifested by the pilgrims to Hurdwar; the natives in general, and more particularly the lower classes, are singularly deficient in their perceptions of inanimate beauty; indeed, it is doubtful whether they are much attracted by loveliness in any form, or whether they do not, either in their wisdom, or their want of relish for the poetry of life, always prefer the *utilis* to the *dulcis*. A tree to them is chiefly, if not entirely, valuable for its shade; a stream is associated solely with the pleasure of quenching the thirst, and cooling the parched brow; and if a wife be docile, and fully equal to her household duties, it matters little what her

claims to beauty may be. Yet, though more than ordinarily free from poetical influences, some portion of the rapturous delight with which the Hindoo devotees hail the first sight of the Ganges, as it issues forth from the Alpine solitudes beyond Hurdwar, must be attributed to the enchantment produced upon the eye by the loveliness of the combinations of hill, and wood, and gushing river. Shouts of "*Mahadeo Bol!*" of "*Bol! Bol!*" and "*Ram! Ram!*" rend the skies, as the worshippers of the sacred waters approach the place of their pilgrimage. The road is covered for miles with travelling parties; rich, poor, of both sexes and all ages, crowd to this oriental carnival, and there is scarcely any part of Asia which does not send forth a deputation; the commercial speculations and traffic, incidental to the fair, being quite as attractive to the worldly-minded, as purification to the devotee.

In former times, the meeting of so vast a multitude was productive of many hostile collisions. The rage of different sects was excited against each other, and quarrels were followed up by blows and bloodshed. The accounts given by the few European spectators who, before the occupation of the country by the British Government, chanced to

visit the strange and wondrous scene, were absolutely terrific. At that time, holy mendicants, and men who could command bands of armed retainers, tyrannized over less fortunate persons; while professional robbers openly pursued their calling, plundering with impunity those who were unable to defend themselves. Affairs now wear a much more peaceable aspect, and the order and tranquillity which prevails reflects the greatest credit upon the civil and military authorities, upon whom the task of maintaining harmony amidst such jarring materials devolves.

All weapons brought by the visitors are delivered up to the care of *chuprassies* appointed by the judge or magistrate to receive them; a ticket is given to the owner, which, upon presenting on his return home, enables him to receive his property again. An island in the centre of the river is garrisoned for the period of the fair by several hundred men, belonging to the Sirmoor battalion of hill rangers, whose usual quarters are at Deyrah Doon. These men are employed to keep the peace, and they have hitherto succeeded most wonderfully.

The town of Hurdwar does not afford accommodation for a tenth part of the numbers who

crowd to its ghauts; but Asiatics are independent of lodging-rooms; the rich carry their canvas dwellings along with them, and the poor are contented with the shelter of a tree. The country round about is formed into one vast camp, in which Arabs, Cingalese, Persians, Tartars, mingle with Seiks, people from Cutch, Guzerat, Nepaul, and all other provinces of India; while, a little removed from the din and clamour of this Babel-like assemblage, are to be seen the tents of European visitants, ladies, who venture fearlessly into the hubbub, sitting as much at their ease as the dust, the myriads of flies, and the intolerable clamour, will admit.

To give some idea of the valuable nature of the articles brought to Hurdwar for sale, it may be interesting to state, that a necklace consisting of a row of alternate diamonds and emeralds was valued at five thousand pounds; for another composed of splendid pearls, a fifth part of that sum was demanded; and those of wrought gold were from thirty to fifty pounds each. All sorts of brazen vessels are exposed for sale, and a great variety of idols of the same metal, which, previous to being consecrated, may be purchased by the pound. After the Brahmins have shed the odour of sanctity upon

them they increase prodigiously in price; persons, therefore, who only buy out of curiosity, should content themselves with the least valuable article. Inferior trinkets, in the shape of beads, necklaces, bangles, armlets, and anklets of silver or of baser metal abound, together with real and mock coral, tinsel, and glass. There are mouth-pieces for pipes, of lapis lazuli, agate, cornelian, and different kinds of marbles, and toys in ivory, stone, and mother-o'-pearl. Rosaries and Brahminical cords in great abundance, with preserved skins of wild animals, and stuffed birds. Truffles are brought from the countries north of the Sutledge. The sherbets are the finest in the world, but the manufacture and the consumption of sweetmeats almost exceed belief. Every fourth shop at Hurdwar is a confectioner's, and the process of making and baking goes on at all hours of the day and night.

The fairs of India differ in many particulars from those of Europe; though jugglers and tumblers are to be found, together with snake-charmers, and others who procure their subsistence by the exhibition of sleight-of-hand or tricks of cunning, there are, properly speaking, none of the shews which attract so much attention at home. The

articles intended for sale are arranged with more regard to convenience than taste, either strewed promiscuously upon the ground, or hidden in the tents; the various wild animals, which form a part of the merchant's speculations, are openly exposed to public view, and, though gazed at with wonder and amazement by strangers from distant lands, are not rendered more profitable by being exhibited for money. The passion for sight-seeing may be equally strong in India as in England, but it is chiefly confined to the pageants displayed at festivals, and as yet curiosity has not been much excited by the wonders of nature. The cattle-department, at the fair of Hurdwar, is the most attractive, both to Europeans and natives, being considered the best in India; horses are brought from Kattiawar, Cutch, the countries north of the Sutledge river, Persia, and the shores of the Red Sea, perfect in blood and bone, proud in their bearing, swift as the wind, and suited to warriors and cavaliers: these fine animals are contrasted with a race less showy, but equally useful, the small compact and sturdy breeds of Cashmere and Cabul, and the mountain ghoonts, of which M. Jacquemont has lately made such honourable mention. Elephants also rear their gigantic forms in the encamp-

ing-grounds of the dealers. Like the horse, they are distinguished by their good points: the tusks should be perfect, and they are greatly esteemed when the tail is of the orthodox dimensions, and furnished with a flat tuft of hair at its extremity.

The difference of appearance between an elephant destined for the pad, or as the caparisoned bearer of princes and nobles, is very great, but will bear no comparison with that which is displayed in the camel. At Hurdwar, every description of this animal may be seen, from the uncomfortable-looking, dejected beast of burthen, to the thorough-bred *hircarrah*, which can maintain its speed during a hundred miles without pause or rest: a winged messenger, which none but the best trained and hardiest of riders can venture to mount. For a very long period, the camel and the dromedary were supposed to be distinct animals, but modern naturalists have decided that there is in reality no difference between them, the single and double-humped being merely a variety, and the fleetness and intelligence of both depending upon early education. Buffalos, cows, and sheep, are likewise exhibited for sale, the list of domestic animals closing with dogs and cats, the beautiful races of Persia, so much sought after in India, making their ap-

pearance by the side of some huge elephant. Monkeys, which may be said to occupy a sort of debateable ground between the wild beasts of the field and the quadrupeds which man has enlisted into his service, are brought in great numbers to Hurdwar; bears, leopards, and cheetas are likewise numerous, and deer of every kind, from the stately nylghau, to that diminutive species which can be so rarely preserved in a state of captivity, even in India, are purchaseable: the yak is also sometimes to be found at Hurdwar, though the advance of the season renders their appearance rare, since they are unable to bear the heat of the plains. The most valuable articles of commerce procurable at this fair, are the gems and precious stones of all descriptions which lapidaries bring from every part of Asia; the shawls and cloths from Cashmere and Thibet rank next; the same dealer may also have a stock of English woollens upon hand; and perfumery and *bijouterie* of every kind from London and Paris find their way to this remote market.

In former remarks upon the subject of the extraordinary low prices at which European goods are sold by native dealers, and the consequent losses sustained by speculations made at a venture, I have mentioned the heterogenous mixture of

articles in the possession of Indian venders, and their extreme ignorance of the intrinsic value of each. Many of the investments sent out to India, are utterly useless to the great bulk of the population; and so little have the climate, habits, and wants of the people been studied by European traders, that cargoes of Irish butter have been despatched to Calcutta, and, as a matter of course, nothing but the casks remained at the end of the voyage, the contents having exuded at every crack. It was at one time thought by the worthies of Glasgow, that the natives of India would gladly exchange their muslin turbans for a covering of felt; and accordingly a ship was freighted with round hats, articles only prized by the *topee wallahs* (hat fellows), the term commonly used to designate Europeans.

I do not know whether the information upon this important subject, communicated in the Madras and Calcutta papers, has travelled to England, but in speaking of the commodities which are be met with at Hurdwar, it will not be out of place to mention those which would be most likely to find purchasers at fair prices. In the cutlery department, there should be scissors, penknives, and razors; next, common padlocks and

cheap locks of every description. Red and blue broad-cloth, and serge, with woollen caps, such as sailors wear, sell well. In cotton and silk, care should be taken to select articles which would make up readily into turbans and *sarees*; the former should be white, scarlet, or crimson, plain or flowered, twenty yards long by twelve inches; cloths for the duputtee six yards long and one and a-half broad, plain, or white, or those with coloured borders, which are much in request; also chintzes of gaudy patterns, which, as the fashions in India are unchangeable, would secure a constant sale. Stationery is in considerable demand, but it should consist of very cheap paper, both foolscap and post, French and Italian, it is said, answering best, in consequence of the low price at which they are manufactured; quills, red wafers, and black-lead pencils, complete the list in this department. The catalogue of English books is rather amusing; in addition to school dictionaries, (that of Mylius, and that by Fulton and Knight, being recommended); Murray's grammar, spelling-book and English reader: the list contains an abridgment of the *Spectator*, *Arabian Nights*, *Chesterfield's Letters*, and whole or abridged; English Dialogues, the *Young Man's Best Companion*, and the *Uni-*

versal Letter Writer. These are eagerly sought after, but as yet, as far as regards the generality of Indian students, the remaining portion of English literature has been written in vain, and will not find native purchasers beyond the presidencies.

Watches of silver or yellow metal, costing from thirty shillings to five pounds, are greatly in demand; also good spectacles, in cheap mountings of silver or metal, plated ware not finding a ready sale in India; small mirrors in plain frames, and lanthorns of a common sort, fitted up with lamps for oil. Patterns of hard-ware manufactory should be procured from India, for the natives will not eat or drink out of new-fangled utensils, however convenient they may be: plates, dishes, basins, and bowls, of iron, copper, and tin, should be fashioned after a peculiar manner, as also the *lota*, or jug, from which if an unpractised European were to attempt to drink, he would inevitably spill every drop of the liquor. In medicine, there is an incessant demand for the following articles: bark-powder and quinine, jalap and cream of tartar, essence of peppermint, brandy disguised as a medicine, eau de Cologne, lavender-water, and strong sweet water, such as eau de mille fleurs. This list will appear very scanty, but the gentle-

man who furnished it assures us that it will not be expedient to add any thing to it for the purpose of supplying the wants of the interior: he caused it to be examined and corrected by several opulent and respectable natives, who were well acquainted with the actual state of the country, and with what would be most likely to sell amidst the great mass of the people; many of the most respectable classes being poor, and content with the commonest conveniences of life.

The anxiety to promote the interests of commerce, will excuse the insertion of the concluding paragraph of this interesting article upon the subject of India trade:* "One point, however, must not be forgotten; most invoices are sold at Madras, where the prices maintained are very moderate. They seldom reach the interior, where a better price would be easily found, and when carried up the country by hawkers and petty dealers, the price becomes exorbitant. To obviate these inconveniences, the exporter should provide cases containing small miscellaneous invoices, *made up in England*, and these should be landed at various parts of the coast, so as to be conveyed straight

* First published at Madras and copied into the Calcutta newspapers.

to the best markets; as, for instance, Tanjore, Madura, Trichinopoly, Nagpore, Seringapatam, or Hyderabad. At these places and many more (the names of which will be gradually ascertained by the merchant), a ready-money price will be immediately obtained; the cost of inland carriage will not average more than two per cent. on the prime cost, while the profits will be from one hundred to three hundred per cent."

The English visitors at Hurdwar are made to smile at the base uses to which the refinements of European luxury are degraded; nothing appears to be employed for the precise purpose for which it was originally intended; table-covers of woollen with printed borders, black and crimson, or yellow and blue, figure upon the shoulders of the poorer classes, who have purchased them for next to nothing, tables being at present unknown in the houses of the natives, while prints are offered for sale upside down, and hung up in the same manner when purchased. A taste for the fine arts is still a desideratum in India, and from personal experience of the difficulty of explaining the most obvious pictorial subject to an uneducated native, the probability of conveying instruction through the medium of paintings seems very questionable.

There is of course nothing like neatness or order in the arrangement of the stalls of the merchants at Hurdwar. Each strives to make the merits of his commodities known by clamorous commendations. It is necessary to be a good judge of every article to avoid being taken in, and to be tolerably expert at driving a bargain: the venders demanding exorbitant sums, which they lower gradually when convinced that they have no chance of succeeeding in obtaining more than a tenth part. The art of selling a horse is well understood in India, and persons ought to be well acquainted with the secrets of the trade to deal with such experienced jockeys. The dexterity with which they shew off the animal's accomplishments, and the extraordinary degree of training and doctoring which they undergo, deceive the inexperienced and the presumptuous youths, who fancy that they may credit the evidence of their senses. An incorrigibly vicious beast, which nothing but a native of the Pampas could ride, is drugged with opium until he appears to be of lamb-like gentleness; while stimulants are administered to the weak and sluggish, which give them a temporary shew of vigour and activity. Some of the finest Arabs bear very high prices; the principal merchant, during the

writer's residence in India, asked £800 for a beautiful milk-white charger, and could not be induced to take a smaller sum: the price of a good camel is £8, but the sums given for elephants vary as much as those at which horses are sold.

The waters of the Ganges are supposed to derive additional sanctity at the expiration of every twelfth year, and the concourse of pilgrims is much greater upon these anniversaries. The astronomers in attendance calculate the precise moment in which ablution is supposed to be particularly beneficial, and, at the sounding of the Brahminical shell, the anxious crowds precipitate themselves into the water. In consequence of the narrowness of the principal ghaut, this simultaneous rush was formerly attended with great danger, and frequently with loss of life. A dreadful concussion, in which numbers perished, determined the British Government to remedy the evil; a more commodious passage to the river was constructed, and the returning pilgrims, when they saw the preparations made to secure their safety, mingled shouts and blessings upon their human benefactors, with their acclamations to Mahadeva. The liveliness with which the Hindoos express their gratitude, and their quick sensibility to kindness

and attention to their convenience and comfort, seem incompatible with the apathetic temperament manifested upon many occasions. The prejudices of caste, and the influence of predestinarianism, which render them indifferent to suffering, are the causes of this inconsistency, and, so great is their effect, that it is difficult to imagine that one and the same person could display such contrary feelings,—so much coldness, and torpor at one period, and so much emotion and vivacity at another. At Hurdwar, all the enthusiastic elements of the native character are called into action; the pilgrims and merchants are lively and energetic beyond the sober conceptions of the English spectators, who look on half-stupified by the clamour, and all astonishment at the power of the human lungs exhibited in a manner almost exceeding belief. The noises incidental to a crowded Indian assemblage have been too often described to need repetition; but they are so supereminently astounding at Hurdwar, that no account of the ordinary din and dissonance can afford the faintest notion of the uproar which prevails. The ringing of bells, the firing of cannon, and the loud huzzas of European multitudes, however deafening, are nothing to the wild and continuous discord which assails the ear at this

meeting. The bawling and drumming of the *fakirs* never appear to cease during a single instant; then, in addition to the most horrid blasts the direst trumpet ever blew, we have the Brahminical shell, the *nobut*, the *dhole*, and the *gong*. The animals, terrified by the confusion around them, neigh, bellow, grunt, and roar, with more than usual vehemence, and this tumult continues, night and day, without the slightest interval of peace. The instant that the voice of a *jogee* or other devotee fails, he applies himself to his bell, ringing with astounding clamour until the lungs can come into play again.

The only ceremonial used by the bathers is that of ablution, which consists merely in dipping in the Ganges, and in paying the tribute, collected carefully by the attendant Brahmins. Those who are desirous of securing a large share of the good things of this and of the next world, are proportionably liberal to the religious mendicants, who form the most conspicuous figures in the scene. The more dreadfully degraded from the dignity of men, the more filthy, squalid, and indecent in their appearance, the higher is the veneration with which these *fakirs* are regarded. Though sufficiently numerous in other places, they repair in troops to

Hurdwar, occupying the verandahs, galleries, and roofs of the principal buildings, and stages of bamboo erected for their accommodation in the centre of the stream, superintending the devotions of the bathers, which are however, generally speaking confined to manifestations of joy at having obtained the end and object of a long and toilsome pilgrimage. The latest accounts from India state that the fair at Hurdwar is upon the decline, and that many of the Brahmins, who were formerly attached to its temples, have taken service under Europeans. By some, this falling off in religious enthusiasm is attributed to the conviction (mainly produced by the subjection of Bhurtpore), that it is impossible to withstand the power of the Christians, who will sooner or later induce all India to conform to their creed, and this idea has doubtless considerable weight with a superstitious people. But, however, in remarking upon the lukewarmness observable, all over Hindostan, towards festivals formerly exciting the highest degree of reverential regard, the labours of the missionaries must not be wholly overlooked and forgotten.

Since the period in which the English first obtained a footing in India, the efforts of these zealous disciples have been unremitting; they are always

to be found in large and promiscuous assemblies, standing at the ghauts, or sitting in the porches of the temples, distributing tracts to the passers-by, and expounding the Scriptures to such as will listen to them. Not discouraged by their apparent want of success, they have continued to exercise the duties of their calling with untiring activity, and we should do great injustice to the intellectual powers of many of the classes of the natives, if we did not suppose that the perusal of such portions of the Holy Writings as have been placed for the purpose in their hands, has not had the effect of disturbing their belief in the monstrous fallacies of the Hindoo religion. Captain Skinner assures us that the Sikhs, in particular, evinced the greatest anxiety to possess themselves of the tracts offered to them by a missionary at the fair of Hurdwar. "I stood," observes the above-mentioned authority, "near the spot where he was sitting, without, I believe, being perceived by him, and was astonished at the attention which they all paid to the few words which he was able to address to them. A middle-aged man, with several of his family about him, came up to me with his book, and repeated the words the '*Padre Sahib*' had spoken to him on presenting it, and, as if really anxious to have

them corroborated, asked with much earnestness if it were true—'*Sach hat?*' I assured him it all was;—'Then,' said he, 'I will read the book to my family when I get home.'"

The new *ghaut* is exceedingly wide and handsome, not less than a hundred feet in breadth, and descending by a fine flight of about sixty steps into the water; it is covered at every hour of the day with multitudes of bathers, ascending and descending, and uttering *Wah! wah!* as they contrast the present facilities with the former difficulties of the approach.

The annual fair at Hurdwar affords abundant opportunities for the exercise of dacoity; it is here that the highest dexterity in the art of thieving is displayed. It is said that, like the vampire-bat, which lulls its victim to sleep by gently fanning him with its wings while it sucks the vital current from his veins, these accomplished marauders employ some soothing art which deepens the repose of the slumberer, while they possess themselves of every article belonging to him, even to the very sheet on which he may be lying; stripped to the skin, and their bodies rubbed with oil, no snake can be more smooth and supple, or more quiet in its movements. They will glide into a tent, in

spite of the utmost watchfulness of the sentinel appointed to guard it; and, so impossible is it to prevent the entrance of such intruders, that the only method to preserve the property is to keep it all upon the outside, under the charge of the sentry, who must neither slumber upon his post nor stir for a single instant from the spot.

At all periods of the year, the *ghauts* at Hurwar are frequented by pilgrims; but they are few in number compared to the tide which rushes down the mountain gorge and along the lower plains at the anniversary of the fair.

This concourse is often very considerably encreased by the visits of persons having little save curiosity for their object. At one anniversary the Begum Sumroo was present with the attendance of a thousand horse, and fifteen hundred infantry. Mahommedan princes frequently come in great force, and the European spectators sometimes amount to three hundred. Upon such occasions the encampments of the visitors are usually fixed at some distance in the neighbourhood, the town and immediate environs of Hurdwar affording scanty accommodation for the pilgrims. Kunkul, where there is a large open plain, which is situated at only two miles distance, is more convenient, and the

greater proportion of Europeans pitch their tents at that place. Hindoo ladies of high rank, when desiring to bathe in the Ganges at Hurdwar, are conveyed into the river in large covered litters, which completely conceal them from the gaze of the multitude. The advantages obtained by the pilgrims are supposed to be in proportion to the number of immersions; but as every plunge into the water must be accompanied by a donation to the priests in attendance, it is only the rich who can obtain any material benefit from these ablutions.

Very different from Hurdwar is the aspect of Juggurnaut. This celebrated temple is erected upon the sea coast of Orissa, in the district of Cuttack, the first Indian land which the passengers of a ship sailing direct from England to Calcutta espy. The dark and frowning pagoda, rising abruptly from a ridge of sand, forms a conspicuous object from the sea, its huge and shapeless mass not unlike some ill-proportioned giant, affording a gloomy type of the hideous superstitions of the land. While gazing on this mighty Moloch, the mind is impressed with a strange awe, the bright and golden sunshine above, and the waving foliage below, only serve to deepen its horrors; it

looks like a foul blot upon the fair face of nature, a frightful monument of man's success in marring the designs of his creator. At Hurdwar, it is not only very possible to sympathize in the feelings of the multitudes, whose adoration is called forth by the bright river, one of the greatest blessings which the Almighty has bestowed upon the burning soil, but to go even farther, and lift up our thoughts, amidst the most beautiful scenes of nature, unto nature's God. At Juggurnaut, there is nothing save unalloyed horror. Frightful idols enclosed in an equally frightful shrine, and seen when viewed from the land to be surrounded by a waste of sand hills, revolt the mind, and give to superstition its most disgusting aspect; and the disagreeable impression, which a distant prospect excites, is increased upon a nearer approach to a scene associated with all that is most fearful and disgusting in religious error. Every known rule of architecture being set at defiance, it would be difficult, without the aid of the pencil, to convey any idea of the half-tower, half-pyramidal style of the great pagoda; it is built of a coarse red granite brought from the southern parts of Cuttack, and covered with a rough coating of *chunam*. The tower containing the idols, which is 200 feet high, and serves as a land-mark to the

mariner, stands in the centre of a quadrangle, enclosed by a high stone wall, extending 650 feet on each side, and surrounded by minor edifices of nondescript shapes.

The magnitude of these buildings forms their sole claim to admiration; they are profusely decorated with sculpture, but so rudely carved as to afford no pleasure to the eye, the only object worthy of praise being a pillar of black stone, beautifully proportioned and finely designed, which has been brought from the black pagoda in the neighbourhood, and placed in front of the principal entrance. The outer gateway and the great portal of the temple are ascended by broad flights of steps, and the interior is described as being very curious and well worthy of inspection, a sight which, however, is very rarely enjoyed by Europeans. The Brahmins in attendance take care to exclude all profane footsteps; but it is said, upon the authority of Major Archer, that a young officer of a native corps, a peculiar favourite with the sepoys under his command, was at one time smuggled into the sanctuary by the connivance of the soldiers, who dyed his skin of the proper hue, dressed him in full costume, and painting the peculiar marks of their caste upon his forehead and nose, crowded round

him upon all sides, and, thus secured from detection, brought him into the very presence of the idol. A distant view, notwithstanding the zeal of his conductors, was all that he obtained; and either there not being a great deal to attract his attention, or a sense of danger preventing him from feeling sufficiently at his ease to make many observations, the information acquired from his account was very scanty; he told his friends that he saw nothing but large courts and apartments for the priests.

The festival of the *Rath Jatra* takes place every year; but, as at Hurdwar, it increases in sanctity at peculiar periods, every third, sixth, and twelfth anniversary, the latter more particularly, being considered of greater importance than those that intervene. The concourse of pilgrims is still exceedingly large, and numbers, as in former times, never return, leaving their bodies to fester on the neighbouring sands, victims to a horrible superstition, though not, as heretofore, sacrificed under the suicidal wheels of the cruel idol's car. Such immolations are becoming very unfrequent; but fatigue, hardship, want of food, and the various diseases brought on by exposure to the pestilential atmosphere of the rains, make fearful havoc among the miserable wretches who hasten onwards to the holy

precincts of the temple, in the hope of obtaining a panacea for all their woes.

A favourite method of approach to Juggurnaut, by those who have either great offences to expiate, or who are desirous of obtaining a more than ordinary portion of beatitude, is to measure the length the whole way from some extraordinary distance. The pilgrim lies down, marks the spot which the extremity of his hands have touched, and rising rests his feet upon the spot, and, again prostrating himself, repeats the same process. Five years are sometimes consumed in this manner, and, as the penance may be performed by proxy, it is often volunteered for a certain sum of money, the wages being most scrupulously earned by the person who undertakes the duty. In no part of the world is gold so all-powerful as in India; upon the morning of an intended execution, a stranger appeared in the place of the criminal, and declaring that he had for a certain consideration agreed to suffer for the person who had made the bargain, seemed quite astonished to find any hesitation on the part of the authorities to execute the sentence, remonstrating with them upon the folly of their scruples, since he was ready and willing to perform his part. Fortunately for him, he had not to deal with his

own countrymen, who, provided that somebody died, would have cared very little whether it was the offender or his substitute.*

The great temple of Juggurnaut was erected in the twelfth century, under the auspices of the chief minister of the rajah of the district. The idols have nothing to distinguish them save their size and their deformity; the principal one, Krishna, is intended as a mystic representation of the supreme power,—for the Hindoos are unanimous in declaring that they worship only one god, and that the images, which they exhibit and to which they pay the most reverential homage, are merely attributes of a deity pervading the whole of nature; —he is associated with the two other personages of the Hindoo triad, and every one of the idols particularly venerated by the numerous tribes and sects of Hindostan, obtains a shrine within the precincts of this huge temple, so that all castes may unite in celebrating the great festival with one accord. The installation of the great idol upon his car, or *rath*, and the procession attendant upon his triumphal march to a country residence about a mile and a-half distant, a journey which occupies three days, are performed with many

* Such substitutions are not uncommon in China.

ceremonies, though not all of a very respectful nature. Previous to this grand ovation, the images are taken from their altars to be bathed, and are then exhibited to public view upon an elevated terrace.

These gigantic busts, hideously ugly, and scarcely bearing the rudest lineaments of the human form, are seen mounted upon pedestals, the latter being concealed by muffling draperies. The hands, feet, and ears of the great idol are of gold, but these are kept in a box by themselves, and are only fastened into their sockets after Juggurnaut has been safely deposited upon his car. While seated in state upon the terrace, a canopy, gay with cloths of various colours, is raised over the heads of the triad, and crowds of Brahmins are in attendance with *punkahs* and *chowries*, to beat off the flies. Occasionally, the sudden flash of a vivid fire-work sheds a momentary ray upon the horrid countenances of these Dagons, and in the next instant all is again involved in the indistinct gloom of an eastern twilight, dimly revealing the huge forms of the idols, and the eager gesticulations of their misguided votaries. The unwieldliness of Juggurnaut and his companions, and the absence of the machinery necessary to effect their removal in a pro-

per and decorous manner, occasions a scene which scandalizes European eyes, but which the natives, accustomed to the doctrine of expediency, survey without feeling that they are offering any indignity to the objects of their worship. The only method of transport which has been yet devised, is by means of ropes fastened round the necks and feet of these cumbrous images, which are thus dragged from their high places down the steps, and through the gateways of the temple, and are afterwards hauled up in the same manner upon the *raths*, without regard to mud or dust.

The car of Juggurnaut is a monstrous vehicle, gigantic in its dimensions, and associated in the mind with images of horror; it is a sort of platform, forty-three feet in height and thirty-five feet square, moving upon sixteen wheels, each six feet and a half in diameter: the ornaments with which it is decorated are by no means splendid, its principal attraction being a covering of striped and spangled broad cloth. The villagers of the neighbouring *pergunnahs*, have their fields rent-free upon the condition of attendance at the cars of the idols. This duty, at present esteemed a privilege, is not exclusively confined to those who are so well rewarded for its performance, but, before the whole

ceremony concludes, the zeal of many of the devotees is so completely exhausted, that the *raths* would scarcely reach their destination were it not for the services which the Brahmins can command. It takes fifteen hundred men to put each of the cars of Juggurnaut in motion, and, when the idols are fairly established in their places, the shouts and cries of the frenzied multitude are such as to lead us to fancy that the whole of Pandemonium had been let loose, an idea which is strengthened by the fiend-like figures of the Jogies, Gosseins, and other religious mendicants, whose grim visages, lighted up with a frantic joy, give them a super-human appearance, as they cheer on their insane followers to acts of horror. Though the ponderous wheels of Juggurnaut no longer go crushing over the bodies of prostrate victims, the fury and excitement, with which the assembled crowd rush to the car, is absolutely appalling. In places of very inferior note, there is something frightful in the noisy lumbering progress of the cumbrous *rath*, surmounted by a hideous idol, dragged about in honour of the festival; but in the very heart and centre of this abominable superstition, the celebration becomes perfectly terrific, and the senses, over-wrought, faint and sicken at the view. The scenery of the

place, its bare sands, the surging of the ocean in the distance, the drenching rains, damp gales, and sudden tempests of the fitful atmosphere, add to the wild horrors of this awful pageant. Each day the exhibition becomes more ghastly, as the wan victims of famine and disease drop exhausted around, making a golgotha of the unhallowed precincts.

The most sacred portion of the soil round the temple of Juggurnaut extends to a circle of about eight miles, though the land is considered holy to a much greater distance; and the whole, during sickly seasons, may be said to be covered with the dead bodies of the pilgrims, who, unequal to encounter exposure to the inclemency of the weather, sink under accumulated hardships, to form a frightful banquet for carrion birds and beasts of prey. Most authorities agree that the tax, which was levied by the government upon the pilgrims to Juggurnaut, here as well as at Allahabad, tended to diminish the number of persons resorting to the festival, and also the amount of suicides. Still a good deal of scandal was excited by the support of an establishment, by Christian rulers, of a stud of elephants, horses, and other equipments for the service of the idol; and the annual waste of life, though not oc-

casioned by actual offerings to the blood-stained wheels of the demoniacal car, is nearly equally shocking, as the result of one of the most frightful delusions that ever spread its curse upon the human race.

The country about Juggurnaut consists of low sand-hills covered by a thick, but not tall, forest of trees, the gigantic vegetable products of the soil not being found so near the coast: about a mile from the sea, cultivation abruptly ceases, the intervening space being a waste of deep and loose sand, extending along the desolate shore.

The town of Pooree is situated upon the margin of this desert; but the European cantonments, with greater regard to comfort and convenience than picturesque beauty, occupy a high ridge, which is perfectly destitute of verdure, fronting the sea, and having the benefit of all its cooling breezes. Pooree is, in consequence, notwithstanding its desolate appearance and its isolated situation, a desirable quarter; *punkahs* are scarcely necessary at any period of the year; and, worn out by the oppressive heat of Bengal and Hindostan, many are delighted to loiter away the time on the health-inspiring, though solitary, shores of Cuttack. The beach is destitute of shells, or of any marine pro-

duction interesting to the naturalist; the neighbouring sea, however, abounds in fish; and oysters, crabs, and lobsters, which are never attainable at Calcutta in their freshest state, are taken with the greatest ease. They are not generally supposed to be equal in flavour to those found in England; but this idea is in all probability more occasioned by the want of appetite, and consequent relish, of the sojourners of a tropical clime than any real inferiority on the part of the fish. During the monsoon the surf rises with great vehemence, presenting breakers equally formidable with those of Madras, and effectually preventing any thing, save boats of native construction, from holding communication with ships in the offing.

It sometimes happens that officers, who have nearly out-stayed the period permitted for absence in England, prevail upon the captains who bring them out to land them at Pooree, whence they can report their return to head-quarters long before the ship can reach its destined port; and as at all times the European outward-bound appear within sight of the black pagoda, or the temple of Juggurnaut, and not unfrequently hold communication by signal with the harbour-master of Pooree, the inhabitants of the station look out with great anxiety for pas-

sing vessels, and derive their greatest enjoyment from the expectation of obtaining news from England before it can arrive at Calcutta.

The sand is ill-adapted either for walking or for riding, and in boisterous weather becomes so great a nuisance as more than to counterbalance the advantages of the sea-breeze. The houses are not built with the attention to comfort which characterizes those of the interior; they are more in the style of the primitive *bungalow*, pervious to every wind from heaven, and gritty in every quarter from the drifting sand. The interior parts of the district abound in game; but in the immediate neighbourhood of Pooree, the ardour of the most determined sportsman is soon quenched by the difficulties which surround him, and the worthlessness of the prizes which reward his toil. But while the mightiest hunter is obliged to remain inactive, a wide field is opened to the antiquary, who may spend the whole period of a protracted sojourn in examining and inquiring into the relics of Hindoo antiquities which are to be found in every part of the hallowed soil.

There are several pagodas, occupying a considerable tract of ground, scattered amongst the sand-hills which have heaped themselves along the

coast. Many of these are protected from the encroachments of the drift, by massy walls; but others, not having the same facilities for keeping the space clear around them, are almost swallowed up in the sand. All are exceedingly picturesque in their appearance; and their gaunt and withered inhabitants, only a little less infernal in their aspect than the deformed objects of their worship, sprawling on the floors, or grinning from a niche, combined with the dreariness of the land-scene, and the loud roar of the ever-sounding surf, altogether form a picture of wild sublimity, which leaves an indelible impression upon the mind.

The black pagoda, or temple of the sun, one of the most splendid Hindoo remains which India can boast, and which is an object of great attraction to all the intellectual visitants of Pooree, is situated about sixteen miles to the north of the native city, in the midst of a wilderness of sand, with which the jungle has struggled, not always unsuccessfully, for the ascendancy: here and there patches of verdure make their appearance, and the gentle risings of the ground relieve the dull monotony of the adjacent plains. It is of much earlier antiquity than Juggurnaut, but has lost its sanctity in the eyes of the multitude, and is now deserted and

left to ruin. The roof is pyramidal, rising from a square building of great solidity; but owing to a defect in the architecture, a large portion of this massive edifice is in ruins, and it is somewhat difficult to comprehend its original design.

Weeds, the gigantic product of a most prolific soil, prickly pear, and copse-wood, have spread themselves over and amidst the enormous masses of recumbent ruins, above which the surviving portion of the temple rears itself, and from the summit of an artificial mound, bids defiance to the encroaching sand, and lifts its head proudly as a beacon to the wanderers of the wave. Those who have closely examined the numberless sculptures which adorn this once splendid temple, report them to be of exquisite beauty; the choice of subject, however, in many must prevent them from being made better known by the aid of drawings; but this unhappy taste does not pervade the whole edifice; and some of the colossal remains, especially of elephants and griffins, are magnificent. Any attempt at minute description would occupy many pages, while it must utterly fail in conveying an adequate idea of the lonely majesty of this desecrated pile. A few *fakirs*, looking more like wood-demons than men, share the shelter afforded by the numerous caver-

nous chambers, with the porcupines and bears composing the principal population of the place; tigers occasionally join the assembly, though the latter intruders, arousing the spirit of adventure in the youth of the neighbouring station, are speedily put to the rout.

The intolerance of the Mussulmans, and their determination to overthrow idolatry in the seat of their conquests, obliged the Brahmins of Juggurnaut, upon more than one occasion, to resort to stratagem for the preservation of their sacred images. Twice have they been carried away and hidden amongst fastnesses beyond the Chilka lake (a neck of the sea, about seventeen miles to the south of Pooree), and there enshrined until better times enabled them to return: but even the servants of the Prophet, tired of the attempt to force their religion upon the still more bigotted followers of Brahma, came at length to a compromise, and turned the object of their antipathy into a source of profit, by instituting a tax, which was continued by the British Government. Formerly, the concourse of pilgrims was so great as to yield a revenue of nine lacs of rupees; but the receipts have dwindled yearly, during a considerable period; and the progress of civilization and of knowledge is

now extending so rapidly, that at no very great distance of time we may hope that the fearful orgies celebrated at Juggurnaut may be looked upon as bygone things, and that a purer creed will be established upon the ruins of that monstrous fabric of superstition, which has so long tyrannized over the mental faculties of the Indian world.

CHAPTER VIII.

GOUR, MANDOO, AND BEJAPORE.

INDIA abounds in deserted cities,—vast extensive ruins,—many of which may be described, in the words of the prophet Isaiah, as peopled only with desolate creatures. One of the most remarkable is Gour, the ancient capital of Bengal. The remains of this once-flourishing place are to be found in the district of Dinagepore, a few miles to the southward of Malda. Its decline and abandonment were caused by the desertion of the Ganges, which formerly flowed beside its walls. About two hundred years ago, the course of the river took a new direction, turning off to a considerable distance from the place to which it had brought wealth and sanctity. To no part of the city, occupying a space of twenty square miles, does the Ganges now approach nearer than four miles and a-half, and places formerly navigable are now twelve miles from the stream, which so unaccountably and capriciously forsook its ancient bed,

leaving behind it all the melancholy consequences of the alienation of a powerful ally.

There is something very poetical in the catastrophe of a city suffering under a fate which may be compared to the miseries resulting from human perfidy; and never did the fellest of war's dire bloodhounds, fire, sword, pestilence, or famine, commit more fearful havoc than that which has silently and stealthily devastated a city, once so fair that it was styled by the Emperor Humaioon, the abode of paradise. The wild luxuriance of vegetation, which characterizes Bengal, has nearly choked up the magnificent remains of Gour: a beautiful lake, adorned with many islands, spread it crystal waters to the eastward of a strong fortress; but both the lake and the citadel have vanished, and the splendours of the city can only be estimated by a few majestic remains of mosques, towers, and gateways, which still exist to shew how deeply it was indebted to architectural taste and skill. The buildings of Gour were very solidly constructed of brick and a stone which has been by many persons mistaken for marble, but which geologists pronounce to be hornblende: vast quantities of the materials have been carried away and sold for building in the neighbouring towns and

villages, but there are still large masses of strong masonry scattered over the surface of the ground, which have been so completely covered with brush-wood, and so intermixed with the gigantic roots of trees, forcing themselves through the rifts made by time and the elements, as more to resemble huge mounds of earth, than the remains of human habitations.

The bricks with which Gour was built are remarkable for the solidity of their texture, the sharpness of their edges, and the smoothness of their surfaces,—characteristics which they have preserved through a series of ages, and which have rendered them a very marketable commodity. Many beautiful edifices have been destroyed without mercy, for the sake of the materials; and it is only the most solid which have defied the ruthless assaults of the pick-axe and crow-bar. Here are also to be found great abundance of the coarse enamelling resembling Dutch tiles, which at one period was so commonly used in the buildings of India. The painted Mosque, so called on account of its gay colours, is profusely decorated with this glazing, and the tomb of Hussein Shah is faced with bricks beautifully carved, and glazed in blue and white.

The arch of the principal gateway, which in picturesque beauty can scarcely be surpassed, is upwards of fifty feet in height; the wall is of correspondent thickness, and its massy strength promises to defy the ravages of time for centuries to come: it exhibits all the splendour of decoration common to the buildings of the Moslem conquerors in India, and perhaps no scene in the world can be dignified with more solemn grandeur than that which is displayed in these noble remains, forming an entrance to the wildest and most desolate jungle imaginable. Amidst the reeds which encumber the soil, may be seen the dwindled relics of fruits and flowers, now wild, which in other days adorned luxuriant gardens: the palm-tree still flourishes, but the coarser vegetation of all kinds is too redundant. The circulation of air is impeded, the weeds are permitted to wither and decay upon the ground, and from these deposits, and from the swamps produced by neglected tanks, miasma is created, which threatens the visitor with disease and death. A few feeble attempts have been made to bring land, which Nature has rendered exuberantly fertile, under cultivation; but the patience of the supine Bengallee has been wearied. The most effectual processes, those of cutting down the

brushwood and burning the weeds, have been neglected, and, content with a bare subsistence obtained amidst clouds of tormenting insects, the foulest air, and the most noxious vermin, the neighbouring population neglect the sources of wealth and comfort which lie so invitingly before them. The tanks, long neglected, and rendered pestilential by the impurities of their stagnant waters, swarm with alligators, and cannot be approached without danger, notwithstanding the pious exertions of resident *faqueers*, who employ themselves in the unenviable task of taming these stupid and hideous monsters.

The success attending efforts, which perhaps would have been more advantageous to the community at large if directed to the destruction of these formidable reptiles, shews that there is no nature so wholly brutish and cruel as not to be susceptible of improvement. The alligators of Gour have learned to distinguish the voice of kindness, and come readily to the call of those who have been at the pains of subduing their fierceness, taking a morsel of rice from the hands of their protectors, who, armed with the doctrine of fatalism, and totally indifferent to life, go fearlessly up to the very jaws which seem yawning for their destruction. In

those parts of India most pregnant with distempers, and most dreadfully infested with savage animals, religious ascetics, both Mahomedan and Hindoo, are certain to be found. It is not easy to say whether these people are actuated by religious enthusiasm or worldly ambition; as long as they exist they excite an extraordinary degree of veneration, which perchance may reconcile them to a life of the most horrible privation; but, as they very often establish themselves in remote and almost inaccessible places, they can have very little enjoyment of the reputation for which they must make such sacrifices. Remorse, or worldly disappointment, are among the causes which induce the religious ascetics of India to fly to the jungle, and associate with the wild beasts of the field; but with many it is merely a profession,—a mode of life to which they are called by caste or descent. No sooner has a *faqueer* been devoured by the tiger, or other dangerous companion, to whose tender mercies he has trusted, than a successor is ready to take his place, willing to encounter the same danger, and to perish by the same catastrophe: in fact, the people of India think it but proper that some kinds of deaths should be hereditary in a family; those especially whose

parents have been devoured by tigers, seek the same fortune, and few are known to desert places which have been peculiarly fatal to their relatives.

The extraordinary size and numbers of the alligators of Gour can be easily accounted for by the circumstances which are so particularly favourable to the growth of all descriptions of reptiles, the hot damp nature of the atmosphere, and the sliminess of the soil, the corruption and fermentation of vegetable matter, the fat weed left to rot in its own effluvia, and generating monsters; but alligators are numerous where these causes do not exist: tanks, which have been long dry, are no sooner filled with water from the periodical rains, than they are discovered to be peopled with reptiles, of which no trace had been previously seen. Persons unacquainted with the extraordinary precocity of the reptile tribe, imagine that these creatures must have found their way from distant waters; but they are in all probability hatched from eggs deposited in the neighbouring sand. The instant one of these amphibious monsters breaks its shell, it is perfectly competent to the care of its own subsistence; its first impulse is to seek for food, and if it escape the numerous enemies watching an opportunity to

make a meal, before it is strong enough to resist them, its growth is so rapid as almost to exceed belief.

The boa-constrictor is an inhabitant of the wood-encumbered ruins of Gour, where it attains to a very considerable size: one twenty-two feet long having been killed about the period of the visit made by Mr. Daniell, the artist, to whose pencil we are indebted for some striking delineations of this once celebrated place. Though still so close to the Ganges, few travellers have put themselves to the inconvenience of going a little out of their way to inspect the relics of a city possessing so many claims to notice. Several straggling villages are to be found upon the site, and there would not be much difficulty in converting the remains of eight bazaars, which are well placed for the purpose, into a flourishing town. Should the spirit of improvement reach the wealthy portion of the natives of India, they have a wide field before them; and, even as a vision of fancy, it is pleasing to imagine the swamps and wildernesses of Bengal, where the serpent broods, the tiger couches, and the wild boar whets his horrid tusks, converted into a smiling plain, shaded by the mango and the tamarind-tree, and peopled with innocent and happy creatures.

There are several buildings superior in beauty and elegance to anything of the kind to be found in the province of Bengal, which might still be preserved from farther decay. One of these, a minaret ninety feet in height and twenty-one feet in diameter at the base, is particularly striking. It is said to have been erected by Firoze Shah, one of the independent kings of Bengal, and as it stands in a part of the city which has been cleared of jungle, its beauties are not obscured by the too redundant growth of the forest, which has proved so inimical to many of its neighbours. A staircase in the interior leads to an open cupola at the top, whence a grand and extensive view may be obtained of the adjacent country. Several gateways remain in tolerable preservation. Trees are springing from the *Soonna Musjid*, or golden mosque; but its lower story is almost entire, and displays great architectural beauty both in the design and the execution of the ornaments. The *Chota Soonna Musjid*, or small golden mosque, has suffered even less from the ravages of time, and presents one of those splendid interiors in which a series of arches, succeeding and crossing each other, delight the eye from every point of view by the play of light and shadow, and the richness and grandeur of the effect. Another

mosque, not very materially injured by the numerous agencies which have been at work at Gour, has a great reputation for sanctity; it is named the Kadan Rasul, from a small stone deposited there bearing the impression of a human foot, believed by the pious to have been made by Mahommed himself. This stone, according to tradition, was brought from Medina many years ago. Surajah Dowlah, the Napoleon of his day, carried it off, but it was restored by Meer Jaffier. This mosque, in consequence of its containing so precious a relic, and boasting the shrine of a celebrated saint besides, is much visited by pilgrims, and therefore has not been suffered to go to ruin like those which have only picturesque beauty to recommend them. One alone, amid the bridges erected over the drains and canals which intersected the roads, have been spared by people who estimated the value of these ruins by what they would bring at market. Europeans have been guilty of this barbarity, some of the works at Fort William having been constructed of stone taken from the tombs of the sovereigns of Gour. The city being in the road to Chirra Poonjee, a sanitarium lately established on the Siccim hills, and much frequented in the hot weather by visitors from Calcutta, Anglo-Indians have an

opportunity of making the only amends in their power for former outrages, by preserving all that now exists in this once celebrated place.

As a city, Gour is perhaps past recall; we must be content to see the ploughshare driven over the halls of kings, and modern cottages constructed from the crumbling brickwork of ancient palaces; but there are other places which might still be snatched from impending destruction. Of these, Mandoo is one of the most interesting. Though, like Gour, vegetation has sprung up so thickly and strongly, as almost to overwhelm many of the buildings, the ruins of Mandoo have not so completely yielded to the evil influences to which they have been exposed, and the situation is much finer and more striking. Originally Hindoo, the residence of the Dhar Rajas, it afterwards became subject to the Patan government, and upon its capture by Acbar, who made himself master of all the Mahomedan states in his neighbourhood, it fell gradually into decay. Mandoo is built upon a large tract of table-land, upon the summit of a mountain belonging to the Vindhyan range, in the province of Malwa, and upon the occupation of this part of the country by the British, it was found to be a shelter for predatory tribes, the strong-hold of

Bheels, who, after robbing and slaughtering in the plains, returned to this solitary fastness, which then effectually secured them from pursuit.

Upon the occupation of Malwa and the neighbouring provinces by the British, the Bheels were deprived of this sanctuary; but they have hitherto, at least the greater portion of them, continued to lead the lawless life to which their forefathers were so strongly attached, and there appears to be more difficulty in spreading civilization amongst them than we have found with any other class or tribe of native Indians. Sir John Malcolm, who has left an enviable name behind him, wheresoever his duties led him to sojourn, was more successful than those who have succeeded him, (perhaps in consequence of having more power and better opportunities,) in persuading these poor people to submit to the established authorities. Like Mr. Cleveland with the hill tribes of Bengal, he tried the power of kindness and confidence, placing trust in those, who, accustomed to be distrusted, felt anxious to maintain the new character with which they had been invested. But there still remains a great deal to be done throughout the vast tracts of country almost wholly inhabited by these people. Though not considered equal in intellectual de-

velopment to the mountaineers of Europe, they share, with the highland freebooters of former days, the generosity and honour which seem common to the wildest tribes.

It often happens that regular campaigns are made against the Bheels, when they appear in force, threatening their more peaceable neighbours with an onslaught. Upon these occasions, if the young officers, who command the outposts, are fond of the glorious sports of an Indian jungle, they do not scruple to throw themselves completely into the power of those against whom they have been sent in arms, and in no instance have they been known to suffer from their confidence. The Bheels are much delighted with skill in shooting; they are also great admirers of English fire-arms, shewing all the wonder and surprise at double-barrels and percussion-locks, which such miraculous inventions are calculated to inspire amongst a rude people; with them, the Freyschutz would be no fable, and they regard the possessors of such magical instruments with the highest degree of veneration. In the bosom of civilized society, the young European adventurers, who have joined the morning's sport and the evening bivouac with the Bheels, have recurred with the greatest delight to the period

passed amongst a proscribed race, who seem to share the curse of the descendants of Ishmael, their hands being against every man, and every man's hand against them. Though the Bheels have been dispossessed of Mandoo, tigers are still there in great force, preferring the halls and chambers of palaces, to dens and caverns in the neighbouring woods. Parties, who come over from Mhow to visit the still splendid remains of the city, are in some danger of encountering tigers in the streets, they being the sole inhabitants, with the exception of the usual complement of *faqueers*, who supply a meal to their four-footed companions, when other game is scarce.

Notwithstanding the frightful neglect and desolation which have for so long a period characterized Mandoo, a very large portion of its buildings are still in a tolerable state of preservation. It possesses some of the most beautiful specimens of Afghan architecture to be found in Hindostan, and is celebrated for its reservoirs of water, and the subaqueous apartments around them, the luxurious retreats, during the hot winds, of the princes and potentates of this once populous district. The ship or water-palace, as it is indiscriminately called, is one of the most remarkable of the relics of

Mandoo; it is built upon a point of land between two large tanks, or rather lakes, and is as much admired for the beauty and picturesqueness of its architecture, as for the singularity of its situation. No one can look upon this delightful abode, without experiencing the most painful feelings of regret at the inevitable destruction to which it appears to be doomed. Not even in Gour, are the sensations produced by the total abandonment of a once splendid city by its human inhabitants, of so melancholy a nature as those which are excited by the awful stillness and utter solitude at Mandoo.

While in the occupation of Malwa, Sir John Malcolm took up his abode occasionally in this deserted city, and it sometimes attracts parties of visitors from the not very distant cantonments of Mhow; but there seems to be very little hope of its ever again becoming a busy haunt of men. The greater number of the buildings at this place are constructed of a fine red-stone, a favourite material throughout the Upper Provinces of Hindostan; but there is a beautiful mausoleum erected over the grave of Hussein Shah, entirely composed of white marble, brought all the way from the banks of the Nerbudda. Mandoo has been described by old writers as a city of vast extent, twenty-two miles in

circumference, and enough is still in existence to satisfy the visitor of the truth of this statement. It is only accessible from the plain below at one point, where there is a broad causeway, and a passage guarded by three gateways, still in good preservation, which leads through the rock to the summit of the mountain on which the city stands. The whole of this mountain is richly clothed with vegetation; gigantic trees spring from the rifts, and the buildings above are embosomed in a mass of splendid foliage. The surrounding country is exceedingly fruitful, and the plains are covered with a peculiar kind of grass, very finely scented, which gives out its perfume to the wandering breeze, and when pressed, yields an oil which has obtained a very high degree of celebrity on account of its medicinal qualities. At Calcutta, where there is some difficulty in getting it genuine, it sells at a high price, but at the places in which it is made it may be procured very cheaply: it is used in all rheumatic complaints with success, and both natives and Europeans hold it in great estimation.

The geology of the neighbourhood of Mandoo is exceedingly interesting, and perhaps there are few places in India where naturalists would find

their researches better rewarded. The whole of Malwa is remarkable for its botanical treasures, and the city of Mandoo is now one great menagerie, where the zoologist may study habits of beasts, birds, and reptiles, with great ease. To the antiquary, also, there would be infinite gratification in the inspection of the Afghan remains, which are of a superior character to those scattered over the other scenes of their conquests. These people are now little known out of Afghanistan, except in the character of traders, in which capacity they travel through the greater part of India, frequently penetrating as far as Calcutta, where their huge forms and strange complexions, of that clear darkness which is so distinct from the copper, or rather bronze colour of the native Indians, contrast very strongly with the swarthy diminutive races of Bengal. The Afghans claim to be descendants of Saul, king of Israel, and if features be any proof of Jewish origin, they have truth upon their side. Bishop Heber was struck by their resemblance to the pictures of the old Masters, and none who have ever seen the rabbis delineated by the painters of the Italian and Flemish schools, can fail to acknowledge the great similarity between them and the humble persons who sometimes

traverse vast distances in order to sell grapes, apples, dates, and pistachio nuts in Hindostan.

Mandoo, notwithstanding its exceeding beauty, and the romantic interest which clings around its mouldering towers, is surpassed in both by that splendid city, which Sir John Mackintosh has poetically styled, "The Palmyra of the Deccan." Were it not for the absence of marble, Bejapore might vie with Delhi and Agra, and perhaps neither of these places can boast of buildings equal in magnificence to the tomb of Mahmood Shah, or the durga of Ibrahim Padshah. in the gardens of the Twelve Imaums. After the partition of Aurungzebe's mighty empire, Bejapore, which, during the short period of two hundred years, existed as an independent Mahomedan kingdom, governed by the princes of the Adil Shah dynasty, fell into the hands of the Mahrattas, and it is only very lately that it has been accessible to European visitants.

Though not so totally abandoned as Mandoo, the city contains a very scanty population, composed chiefly of Mahomedan priests, and religious beggars, attached to the different mosques and durgas, the poorer classes of Mahrattas, and a few more orthodox Hindoos: the latter rejoice

greatly in a small tank containing liquid of a milky hue, which they assert to be the true water of the Ganges, brought by a pious Brahmin to the city, and renewed in all its sanctity by some miraculous process. The city consists of two parts, both surrounded by a wall, that comprizing the citadel, being much more strongly fortified than the remaining portion. At a little distance, it does not betray the ruin and desolation which lurk within; cannon still bristle upon the bastions, and the immense assemblage of towers, domes, pinnacles, and spires, which shoot up into the sky, partially intermixed with tamarind and other trees, deceives the distant spectators, who cannot imagine that they are about to enter a vast wilderness, where the human habitations have crumbled into dust, leaving mosques and mausoleums to tell the tale of former glory. Though the palaces, which once graced Bejapore, could not have been inferior in splendour to any of the imperial residencies still existing in India, they have suffered to a far greater extent than the tombs and temples in their neighbourhood: many of the latter still being perfect, and promising to survive during many centuries.

Notices of Bejapore are scattered throughout

many publications, but a regular history, or a continuation of that given by Ferishta, is still wanting, and it is scarcely possible to imagine any subject connected with Indian records, which would be so interesting. After the first irruptions under Mahmood Ghizni, into India, the whole country offered a field for Mahomedan adventurers, who required little more than an enterprizing spirit and military skill, to establish their fortunes amid the troubles and distractions of the native powers. Yoosoof Adil Shah, the founder of Bejapore, is said to have been a son of the Turkish Emperor Bajazet, who, being saved in the general massacre of his brothers, by the substitution of a slave-boy, about his own age, was sent into a foreign country for safety, and when he attained to manhood, turning his steps to India, acquired some renown in the wars of the Deccan. Upon the death of his patron, the Patan empire falling into pieces, Yoosoof was encouraged to found a new kingdom, and to place himself at the head of it. He succeeded in his object, and, notwithstanding the internal troubles and the foreign wars in which his successors were more or less engaged, during the whole period of their dynasty, they have left works behind them which would seem to

require a protracted interval of the most profound peace. There is scarcely any city in India which boasts of public erections of so much splendour and utility as Bejapore; the aqueducts, which are still in existence, are of the most extensive and superb description, and there are fountains, wells, tanks, and *bowlees*, all solidly constructed, either of stone, or finely tempered *chunam*, nearly innumerable.

The sovereigns of Bejapore maintained a good understanding with the Moghul emperors until the reign of Aurungzebe, who, almost without a pretext, put an end to a kingdom which he might have rendered tributary. It is said that his favourite daughter pointed out to him the probable effects of the narrow policy to which his selfish ambition would lead, but he paid no attention to her remonstrances, refusing to permit any monarch, even professing the same creed, to exist within the wide circle of his dominions. In weakening the Mahomedan power by the deposition of the sovereigns of the Deccan, Aurungzebe precipitated the fall of his successors, by giving advantages to the Mahrattas, who were beginning to shew manifestations of their rising greatness, which ought not to have passed unnoticed. Almost before

Aurungzebe was cold in his grave, they possessed themselves of the kingdom which he had so unjustifiably wrested from its founders, and a very short period of time saw them masters of the territories which he had purchased at the expense of so many crimes. From the moment that Bejapore fell into the hands of the Mahrattas, its decay commenced; nothing ever flourished under the rule of a people equally destitute of public virtue, and of all relish for the refinements of civilized life. They plundered and massacred wherever they went, and grovelled in filth, in the mud huts which they erected amid the smoking ruins of stately palaces.

When the British officers, who served in the wars of the Deccan, beheld Bejapore, which until that period had been rarely visited by Europeans, they were astonished by the splendour which greeted their eyes upon every side. Major Moor, in one of his early works, writes thus: "We cannot but feel how inadequate we are to describe the meanest of a thousand buildings in this wonderful city, and would be very glad to see a pen better skilled in these matters so worthily employed. Ours was but a transient view, and for our own part, totally unused to such sights, we

were so lost in admiration as scarcely to believe what we saw to be realities."

The walls of the citadel and the principal buildings of the city are of hewn stone, which is susceptible of a very high polish, some of the interiors shining with all the splendour of marble: the masonry also is well worthy of notice, many of the finest specimens of architecture being put together without the aid of cement. At the close of the campaigns under the Duke of Wellington, Bejapore was given up to the rajah of Satara, and since that period the progress of decay has been partially arrested. The revenues of some of the neighbouring villages have been set apart for the maintenance of the attendants at the tombs and mosques, and though neglect is but too visible, the visitors are not disgusted with the impurities which so speedily collect where bats and birds are permitted to dwell unmolested. There would be little difficulty in restoring the greater portion of the decaying splendours of Bejapore, although some of its finest edifices are past recall.

The tomb of Mahmood Shah, from some defect in its construction, is reported to be in a very dangerous condition; the foundation has sunk, and the walls in more than one place are split from top

to bottom. This gigantic, but somewhat heavy pile, may vie with the finest cathedrals in Europe, both in size and grandeur; the great dome, called by the natives the burra Gumbooz, is larger than the cupola of St. Paul's and only inferior in dimensions to that of St. Peter's at Rome. It is said that a silver shrine formerly covered the remains of Mahmood Shah, which are deposited in an immense hall beneath the dome; but this became the spoil of the Mahrattas, and the sarcophagi of the king and his family are now only remarkable for a very ugly, though highly-esteemed, coating of holy earth, brought from Mecca, mingled with sandal-wood dust, and formed into a coarse plaster.

The *durga* of Abou al Muzzuffer differs very widely in its style from that of Mahmood Shah, and though an immense pile, is distinguished for the lightness and elegance of its architecture. The interior is most exquisitely ornamented with enamelling of gold upon a blue and a black ground, the latter being polished so highly as to look like glass. It is said that the whole of the Koran is contained in the embellishments of this splendid edifice, emblazoned in large characters intermixed with arabesques tastefully sculptured in elegant combinations of fruit and flowers.

Ibrahim Adil Shah, to whose memory this superb mausoleum is dedicated, was one of the most popular of the sovereigns of Bejapore. He has left a name behind him equally reverenced both by Moslem and Hindoo, and his shrine is visited by the worshippers of Brihm, as well as the disciples of the prophet, each regarding him as a saint to whom their devotions may be paid with advantage to themselves. The corrupted state of Mahomedanism in India is strongly exhibited at Bejapore, where the true believers, now few and of no weight in the community, are little better than idolators.

There is a large piece of brass ordnance at Bejapore, which is an object of veneration amongst all castes and sects, who pay to the unseen power, lodged in this engine of destruction, homage almost amounting to divine honours. Many fabulous legends are told by the natives about this gun, which is named *Mulk-i-Meidan*, 'sovereign of the plain,' and which became the spoil of Ali Adil Shah, who took it in battle against the king of Ahmednuggur. The weight of the Monarch of the Plain is forty tons, and it is of correspondent dimensions, so large in fact, that it has never yet been charged with the quantity of powder which its chamber would contain. The metal of which

it is composed is said to have a considerable portion of silver, and a smaller quantity of gold, mixed with the tin and copper forming its chief materials. When struck, it emits a clear, but somewhat awful sound, similar to that of an enormous bell, which is endurable only at a considerable distance. The mighty voice given forth by a touch, added to the terrible idea of havoc conveyed by this formidable piece of artillery, doubtless has assisted in impressing the natives with a feeling of reverence towards a prodigy of strength and power, which they cannot imagine to have been wholly the work of man. They burn incense before it, smear it over with cinnabar and oil, wreathe it with flowery garlands, and never approach it without joined hands and countenances expressive of the highest degree of reverence and devotion.

There is a tradition current at Bejapore, respecting a sister of the *Mulk-i-Meidan*, named *Kurk-o-Budglee*, 'thunder and lightning;' but no authentic account has been preserved of it, and its existence has been doubted. Yet, as the natives of India seem always to have been ambitious of possessing themselves of pieces of ordnance beyond the ordinary size,—the great gun at Agra being one of the best known specimens,—we must not too hastily reject

the tales told about the *Kurk-o-Budglee*, which is said to have been carried to Poonah. The *Mulk-i-Maidan* is sometimes fired, but upon very rare occasions. The rajah of Satara did Sir John Malcolm the honour of saluting him with the discharge of this celebrated gun, and the accounts of the effects it produced will probably prevent it from being again the cause of similar catastrophes: some of the old buildings came down; others shook to their foundations, and several women were frightened to death by the horrors of the concussion.

During the brief period of the Adil Shah dynasty, the Portuguese obtained a settlement at Goa. Unfortunately, their chronicles are of a very confused description, and afford little information respecting the events which were passing around them. We learn nothing from their accounts of the beauty and magnitude of a city, which must from its very commencement have been one of the most remarkable places in India. Tavernier, who was the earliest European traveller in the Deccan, either could not have seen it, or must have wilfully misrepresented a place, which he describes as having nothing worthy of note, excepting the crocodiles inhabiting the surrounding ditch. Beja-

pore is not now famous for its alligators; their existence in the moat has been denied, and this extraordinary city is still without an historian, there being scarcely even the most brief catalogue extant of the various objects calculated to attract the attention of the curious.

The Turkish descent of Yoosif Adil Shah, his Persian connexions, and the foreigners from other countries whom he invited to his court, and who were entertained by him and his successors with truly regal magnificence, occasioned the introduction of a greater variety in the styles of the different buildings of Bejapore, than is to be found in any other city in India. A few pencils have been employed in delineating some of the most splendid; but volumes would be required to give an adequate idea of the architectural beauties of this unaccountably neglected place. During the long period in which the continent was closed to adventurous footsteps, it seems wonderful that India should not have been more attractive to persons of truant disposition. The works of Daniell and of Salt were, or ought to have been, sufficient to shew that the plains of Hindostan possessed objects meriting attention; but they were suffered to pass unheeded, and few seemed to think India worthy

of a thought, until the publication of the journal of the late Bishop Heber afforded newer and juster ideas of a country replete with interest.

Bejapore is celebrated for its tamarind trees; the groves which have arisen amidst the once populous streets and thoroughfares of this extensive capital, have not, as at Gour and Mandoo, completely usurped the soil, or become the agent of desolation: the growth of vegetation is slower in the arid plains of the Deccan; and the green canopy of the trees, and the cool shades beneath them, are particularly agreeable amidst the immense masses of buildings. The inhabited part of Bejapore bears a very small proportion to the space which is almost wholly deserted; large tracts occur entirely covered with ruins, the remnants of dwelling-houses long laid prostrate on the earth. Emerging from these dreary-looking fragments, we come to some splendid building still entire, and while passing through immense quadrangles, watered by fountains and adorned with flowers, we can scarcely believe they are situated amid a wide waste of ruins. The fort is garrisoned by a few Mahratta soldiers, who keep the guns in tolerable order; and every season increases the number of visitants, attracted by the report of the architectural wonders of the place.

There are several fine tanks and reservoirs of water kept in good preservation; one of these, which bears the name of the *Taj Bowlee*, is a splendid piece of workmanship, surrounded by a *serai*, for the accommodation of travellers, and approached through a noble gateway. Very little of the ground which is unoccupied by buildings has been brought under cultivation, and the whole of the country around the city exhibits marks of neglect. The inhabitants, who are not numerous, are perhaps too poor to repair the ravages of war, or they have not yet acquired confidence in the security of property. The noble ambition which would lead to the restoration of fading splendour, does not appear to belong to the native character. Though displaying a passion for the pomp of architecture, they have no pleasure in preserving the works of others from decay; comparatively slight exertions would suffice to avert the fate which seems impending over Bejapore; but, if left to the public spirit of the ruling powers, we fear that there is little chance of its ever regaining any of the advantages it has lost, and it is impossible not to regret that this beautiful city belonged to the ceded portion of the district.

Religious mendicants abound in Bejapore; these

are chiefly of the Mahomedan persuasion; although, besides the small pond, supposed to contain the holy water of the Ganges, there is a Hindoo temple, of such great antiquity, as to be said to be the work of the Pandoos, the architects to whom the cathedral-like excavations of Ellora are attributed. This temple is extremely low, the roof resting upon clusters of pillars formed of single stones, and apparently belonging to an age earlier, or at least ruder, than that which produced the magnificent designs and rich sculptures of the cave-temples.

Many of the *faqueers*, before-mentioned, subsist entirely upon casual charity, having nothing from the religious edifices, which they have made their abode, excepting the shelter of a roof; others receive a regular stipend from the government, and it is to their zeal that the tombs and mosques are indebted for the cleanliness which a true believer is always desirous to maintain in every shrine. It is the custom, in many Mahomedan temples in India, to make offerings of cloths for canopies and other things, which are either divided amongst the *moollahs* in attendance, or sold for their benefit; but Bejapore, though boasting many saints, attracts few pilgrims; while other *durgas*,

greatly inferior in splendour, and not more celebrated for the ashes they contain, are bountifully endowed by the contributions of the pious. The few rupees which Christians disburse amongst the persons in care of the numerous places of worship, form nearly the sole source of emolument of the priesthood at Bejapore, independent of the scanty sum already mentioned as being devoted to their maintenance. From these men, very little information which can be depended upon is gained; they launch out into wild and improbable tales, entertaining enough in themselves, but disappointing to persons really desirous to become acquainted with facts relating to some of the nameless tombs and temples prodigally scattered in every quarter of the city.

The notion that vast treasures are concealed amidst the ruins, is very prevalent, and would be the making of the fortune of an adept of the Dousterswivel genus. Many persons have been known to speculate in the purchase of an old wall; but as yet the success of these experiments has not been made public. Even Runjeet Sing and the Begum Sumroo do not appear, clever and well-informed as they both undoubtedly are, to be aware of the superior security of a foreign bank to any

subterranean place of deposit for their surplus wealth; and as they are said to bury money every year, there can be little doubt that this favourite expedient was resorted to in former times all over India.

Bejapore, in all probability, possesses concealed mines of gold and gems; but, without the aid of the divining rod, it would be very difficult to discover them. One small mausoleum, called the *Mootee gil*, is said to derive its name from an interior coating of *chunam* formed of pounded pearls. A nobleman, who possessed a vast quantity of these valuable gems, excited the envy of the reigning prince, and was in danger of being arrested upon a charge of treason, the only pretext which could be devised to deprive him of the coveted treasures. Obtaining timely notice of the plot, he explained the predicament in which he stood to the ladies of the *zenana*, who, determining to defeat the object which the tyrant had in view, destroyed all the value of the prize, by reducing the pearls to powder. It was no longer considered worth while to pursue the owner of a heap of useless dust, and the monarch spared himself a crime by which there was nothing to be gained: the pounded gems were, it is said, afterwards given

to a religious person, who converted them into *chunam*, and made it the decoration of a tomb, which assuredly appears to be stuccoed with some very precious material.

Weeks, nay, even months, might be spent in the examination of all the curious objects which Bejapore affords, and there could scarcely be a more interesting task than that of filling up the meagre details, with which alone we have hitherto been furnished, concerning a city which has been so unaccountably cheated of its well-merited renown.

CHAPTER VI.

ENVIRONS OF CALCUTTA.

BARRACKPORE, SERAMPORE, AND DUM DUM.

IT has been the policy of the Indian Government to separate soldiers and citizens from each other; the forces, therefore, which are considered necessary for the defence of Calcutta, are stationed, the infantry at the distance of sixteen miles, and the artillery at eight, from the seat of government. Fort William,—a strong-hold to which the Governor-general may retire in case of invasion from abroad or rebellion at home, and considered by experienced engineers to be impregnable,—which will contain provisions and stores to withstand a siege as long as that of Troy,—in times of security, is garrisoned by a single King's regiment, or a part of two at the most, the sepoy duties being performed by a detachment from Barrackpore, relieved at stated periods, while the guard employed in Calcutta is composed of the city militia.

Barrackpore is an irregularly-built station, situated on the left bank of the Hooghley. Many

of the houses are as splendid as the mansions of the neighbouring city, but the larger portion consist of bungalows, considerably smaller than those of the Upper Provinces, but generally speaking, more carefully finished, and built and fitted up in a superior style. A few look upon the river, but there is no broad esplanade, as upon the opposite bank, where Serampore's proud palaces are mirrored on the glassy surface of the stream. Those mansions, however, which do command the fresh breezes from the water, are delightfully cool, and the views from the balconies are superb; for it is scarcely possible to imagine any thing more grand and imposing, in an architectural display, than the splendid settlement of the Danes upon the Hooghley. The beauties of Barrackpore are of a different kind; its buildings are embosomed in trees, and with the exception of the palace of the Governor-general, which is raised in a commanding situation, only peep out between the branches of luxuriant groves. The country all round is wooded to excess, affording a most agreeable shade, and offering specimens of floral magnificence not to be surpassed in any part of the world. The magnolia attains to a gigantic size, and fills the air with perfume from its silvery vases; other forest-

trees bear blossoms of equal beauty; the richly-wreathed pink acacia, and numerous tribes, adorned with garlands of deep crimson and bright yellow, abound; and although, with the exception of the park, which has been raised into sweeping undulations by artificial means, the cantonments and their vicinity present a flat surface, the combinations of wood, water, and green sward, in numberless vistas, nooks, and small open spaces, yield scenes of tranquil beauty, which eyes however cold can scarcely contemplate unmoved.

Though an authoritative mandate from the Court of Directors, dictated by unaffected alarm, put an effective stop to the completion of one of the Marquess of Wellesley's most splendid projects, Barrackpore is still indebted to him for a park, which is justly considered one of the finest specimens of dressed and ornamented nature which taste has ever produced. Enough has been done to the mansion to render it a very elegant and commodious residence, and the gardens attached to it are unrivalled both in beauty and stateliness, combining the grandeur of Asiatic proportions with the picturesqueness of European design. The gravelled avenues are wide enough to allow wheel-carriages to pass, and these ample paths wind

through broad parterres, and shrubberies of the most brilliant flowers, sometimes skirting along high walls of creeping plants trained against lofty trees, at others overlooking large tanks so completely covered with the pink blossoms of the lotus, as to conceal the element in which this splendid aquatic plant delights. A large stud of elephants is kept at Barrackpore, and these noble animals, decorated with flowing *jhools* of scarlet cloth, edged with gold, and bearing fair freights of ladies belonging to the vice-regal court, may be seen pacing along the flowery labyrinths, to European eyes strange guests in a private garden. These blooming plantations afford excellent parrot-shooting, a sport to which some of the great men of the presidency are said to be much addicted, but which it grieves persons possessed of the slightest degree of sentiment to see carried on in the secluded haunts of a pleasure-ground, and against those bright-winged visitants, whose gem-like plumage adds so much of ornament to the scene.*

* There are several varieties of the paroquet tribe in Bengal, some of them the loveliest little creatures imaginable, with purple heads covered with bloom like a freshly-ripened plum; others ring-necked, with slender elegant bodies, and exceedingly long tails.

The park has been laid out and planted with great care and taste; it affords specimens of trees which are not to be found congregated together in any other part of India: some of these exotics are particularly distinguished for their size and beauty, and are objects of great interest to all the visitors. The elevated portions of Barrackpore Park command extensive views of the superb sweeps of the river, with their enchanting varieties of scenery, their rich woods and noble residences, the broad ghaut intervening, and occasionally a tower-encircled dome or light minar, rising from the umbrageous groves.

Barrackpore, as it may be easily imagined, is a great resort for all classes of persons from Calcutta; it is not yet furnished with an hotel or a boarding-house of any kind for the reception of strangers, who must be billeted by letters of introduction upon private families. Doubtless, this desideratum, if it be one, will be soon supplied, as in the influx of Europeans which the new order of things will bring to India, private hospitality must be speedily worn out. The distance from Calcutta is sixteen miles, and it is approached on the land side by one of the finest roads in the world, very broad, kept in excellent repair, and shaded, to the

great delight and comfort of the various traversers, by an avenue of trees. The traffic is of course very considerable, the tide interfering with the water-carriage; *coolies* and *hurkaras* of every description are journeying to and fro at all hours of the day.

Notwithstanding the shelter afforded by the leafy canopy above, Europeans do not often venture to brave the noon-tide heat, except in the mildest season of the year, their progress being chiefly performed in the morning or evening. Half-way, at a place which bears the name of Cox's Bungalow, relays of horses, for those who travel in wheel-carriages, are stationed; the customary number of bearers will, however, convey a palanquin the whole distance; and in the days of velocipedes, young men, easily incited to deeds of enterprise, have been known to go up in the morning and return at night, with no assistance save that afforded by their wooden chargers: a feat which the climate of Bengal renders worthy of record, for even in the cold weather violent exercise of any kind is attended with some danger. The journey to Barrackpore must be enchanting to those who delight in forest-scenery; the hand of man is apparent in the smooth, finely-levelled road, which offers itself to

the traveller: but a dense jungle appears to close it in on either side. Native huts, of the wildest and simplest construction, meet the eye in the most picturesque situations, many with scarcely any roof excepting that afforded by the overhanging branches of trees, which never lose their leafy mantles, yet not destitute of an air of comfort; the floors, of coarse but well-tempered *chunam*, being scrupulously clean, and the jars and other domestic utensils neatly arranged and kept in order. Monkeys may be detected, disporting amidst blossoming boughs; the jackall glides through the covert, and the woods echo with the sullen notes of lonely birds. The denseness of the population, and the vast numbers of natives, who go on their way rejoicing in the shade, which tends so much to lighten their toils, prevent all idea of solitude, though the prospects are so truly and exclusively sylvan, that it is not until the suburbs of Calcutta are approached, that the traveller can imagine himself in the close vicinity of the capital of Bengal. Beyond these suburbs, there is nothing of the stir and tumult usually to be seen in the outskirts of a large city; few private conveyances of any kind, and no public Anglo-Indian vehicle: an omnibus was attempted, but did not succeed. At the time of its

starting, there were too many prejudices to contend against; few would condescend to enter it except by way of frolic, and it was soon laid up in ordinary in the builder's yard. The time is perhaps not far distant when the echoes of the Barrackpore woods may be startled by the thumping of a steam-engine, and the passengers learn to encounter the heat of a furnace added to that which they now find so difficult to endure.

This fine road is preferred, by the visitors to Serampore, to the less direct communication on the other side of the river, though it involves the necessity of crossing the Hooghley in a boat. The beauty of the latter-named place, its delightful situation, the easy distance from Calcutta, and the comparative cheapness of its bazaars, would render it a very desirable retreat for the families of many persons engaged in mercantile business at the presidency, were it not for the circumstance of its being a sanctuary against the merciless hostilities of Calcutta creditors. Under the control of a Danish governor, and protected by its own peculiar laws, it offers an asylum for persecuted debtors, and is in fact a sort of *Alsatia*, where those who dread the horrors of a writ betake themselves until they can arrange their affairs. A residence at Seram-

pore, therefore, is productive of a very unpleasant imputation, and few voluntarily encounter the stigma attached to it. This small and beautiful settlement forms also the Gretna Green of Bengal, at which parties may not only contract a clandestine marriage, but, when tired of the connexion, divorce each other with very little trouble and expense. Privileges so tempting, to the credit of the neighbouring community, are not often taken advantage of, and the place is happily more celebrated for its missionary college and press than for the labours of those who supply the places of proctors and other functionaries connected with ecclesiastical courts.

Serampore is, without exception, the best-built and best-kept European settlement in India. In addition to its superb esplanade, which stretches along the river's bank, it is composed of several regular streets, presenting a succession of handsome houses, inclosed in spacious gardens and interspersed with fine trees; the whole is kept scrupulously clean by the daily task-work of the convicts, who carefully weed the roads, and remove every unsightly object. The society at Serampore is very limited; the appointments of the governor are by no means splendid; he lives in a style of great simplicity, without affecting any state, appearing in public in

a handsome but plain equipage, generally a palanquin, attended by a few *chobdars*, who brandish their silver maces and make as much noise as they can to arouse the world with the intelligence that the *burra sahib* is passing by: a mode of procedure which the natives think necessary to establish their own importance as well as that of their master. Besides the governor, there are not many official situations of consequence; a small number of merchants, and the families of gentlemen attached to the missionary college, comprise the principal residents; the rest are made up of people of very dubious rank, and strangers, whose claims to respectability are, from the occasion of their sojourn, of course rather doubtful. The religious creed of many of the settled inhabitants indispose them to gaiety of any kind, and the Danish residents seem to cultivate retired and domestic habits; there is consequently less visiting, party-giving, or festivities of any description, going on at Serampore than in any other place in India under European sway.

Notwithstanding these circumstances, Serampore must certainly be styled a cheerful town, and it is in many respects preferable to its military neighbour. The esplanade, after sunset, usually ex-

hibits a very gay scene; it is the only place in Bengal in which custom sanctions a promenade: the whole of the European population is poured forth, some in carriages, but the majority on foot, to enjoy the refreshing gales from the water, and the beauties of the surrounding prospect. These frequently attract large parties from the opposite cantonments; groupes of well-dressed ladies, many without bonnets, which are not deemed necessary appendages in the hot seasons, are seen surrounding the *ton-jaun* which conveys some less robust friend. Gentlemen are, of course, in full attendance; and cadets especially, rejoice in their freedom from military restraint, and in the indulgence of pedestrian exercise, which is deemed *infra dig.* at the presidency. The tide also brings numerous visitors from Calcutta, particularly the officers of trading vessels, anxious to penetrate into the interior, and to travel, as they term it, up the country.

There would be some difficulty in imagining a more beautiful scene than that which evening presents at Serampore. The breadth of the river, its superb sweeps, the woody promontories which jut into it, diversified by picturesque buildings; the varied richness of the foliage; the myriads of fireflies, and the silvery brightness of the waters re-

taining the last crimson flush of sun-set, until night comes to pave the shining surface with stars, form altogether so enchanting a combination that fancy delights to recal the landscape in all its original splendour.

Barrackpore, as a military station, is in bad odour with the officers of the Bengal army; very few appear to appreciate the advantages of being so near to the festal scenes of Calcutta; the climate of the Upper Provinces is esteemed of superior salubrity, and the very name of *half-batta* is sufficient to render it hateful. Exclusive of the temptations to expense, which a large society must always hold forth, the actual rate of living at Barrackpore, even with the diminution of the batta, cannot possibly be higher than that of more remote stations, where European commodities are double and sometimes treble in price. The conveniences of life are infinitely more abundant, and its pleasures incalculably greater; nevertheless, it has an ill-repute, and by a happy adaptation of taste to the scenes selected for the most permanent abode of the Company's military servants, the Mofussil is generally preferred to the neighbourhood of the metropolis.

The society of Barrackpore is too large to admit

of that close and constant intercourse, which is carried on at less populous stations, where the domestication of persons must be pleasant or the reverse, according as their tastes and habits are suited to those of each other; but it offers the great advantage of a choice of acquaintance; news, fashions, and the latest publications from England, France, and America, are easily attainable; the balls and parties of Calcutta are within reach; and all the enjoyments derivable from the beauties of cultivated nature are afforded in the lovely landscapes which appear on every side.

The garrison at Barrackpore consists of several regiments of sepoys, under the command of a major-general; the staff is exceedingly numerous, embracing appointments peculiar to the station. There are besides a considerable number of private residents, the families of retired officers, and widows who, possessing large connexions in India, prefer it as a residence to the parent state; many of these persons enjoy considerable wealth, and live in a style of appropriate splendour. Nevertheless, the society is subjected to great vicissitudes, and its gaiety cannot be depended upon for more than the passing season. The caprice of some, the unsocial disposition of others, or the stoppage of a

house of agency, will put an end for a time to all festivities; and the extreme of dullness prevails until a change in the regiments, or some other equally favourable circumstances, occur to give a fresh impetus to the flagging spirits of the community. The presence of the Governor-general is not always productive of the gaiety which is generally expected to be the accompaniment of a vice-regal court.

Barrackpore is frequently resorted to by the chief person in the state, as a retreat from the toils of business and the scarcely less fatiguing duties entailed upon him at public entertainments. Few balls or fêtes of any kind are given at the Park, possibly to avoid the offence which the exclusion of visitors from Calcutta might give, and the great inconvenience resulting from their attendance. The last affair of the kind proved a complete failure, in consequence of an unexpected gale from the south-west; a contingency from which Bengal only for the short period of the cold season is altogether free. A very large proportion of the guests determined to go up by water, anticipating a delightful excursion by starlight; but the horrors of the storm burst upon them ere they could reach their destination; the Hooghley ran mountains high,

washing over the decks of the frail little summer-vessels, and driving many on shore, to the consternation of the passengers and the utter ruin of their ball-dresses. The travellers by land were not better off; the horses took fright at the lightning; the road was rendered impassable by trees torn up by the roots; ladies, terrified out of their senses, made an attempt to walk, and the party, when collected at last, presented a most lugubrious spectacle, a concourse of wet, weary, miserable guests, eagerly impatient to return to their homes, yet compelled to await more favourable weather.

The society at Barrackpore is sufficiently extensive not only to admit of selection, but also to allow its leaders the indulgence of the exclusiveness so much the fashion at home. Persons who consider themselves eligible are sometimes left out of the invitations to the station-balls, and parties more strictly private are scrupulously composed of families of a certain rank, a distinction unknown in the Mofussil, and which is very grievous to bear: at least, such are the complaints alleged against Barrackpore by discontented individuals; but these statements must be taken with some grains of allowance, the extent of the evil depending entirely upon the temper of those persons who

hold the highest offices, and who remain too short a time stationary to give a permanent tone to society.

Cadets, formerly, on their arrival at Calcutta, were permitted to travel alone, or in company with one or two other lads, as raw and as ignorant as themselves, to the places of their destination; but this is no longer the case. Inexperienced boys, ripe and ready for all sorts of mischief, were found to be woeful mismanagers of their own concerns, and to be too ready to trespass on the rights and privileges of the natives; they rarely penetrated far into the interior without getting into some scrape, the least of their exploits being the squandering of all their money at the first halt upon the road, with the consequence of depending upon their skill in foraging for the remainder of the journey. Cheated by dishonest natives, they were apt to take revenge upon those who were so unfortunate as to fall into their clutches; and considering all the surrounding temptations, it is only wonderful that so few outrages were committed by the wild youth let loose in a foreign country, and inflated with the idea of their own importance. Many amusing narratives may be gathered from the sober lips of veterans, pleased to recal the sports and

frolics of their boyish days; but tragic incidents sometimes occurred, and it was at length found expedient to appoint cadets, posted to regiments stationed at distant places, to do duty at Barrackpore until they could be sent up the river in a fleet under the care of an experienced officer. Here they are taught their first military lessons, and as the duties are performed under the eye of a major-general, they are usually glad to escape to some station where they hope to enjoy a greater degree of liberty, since, however exciting the perils and fatigues encountered in a hot campaign, there is apparently nothing more irksome to a soldier, nothing that is found to be so fertile a subject of complaint, as the necessity of attending drill, of appearing on parade, of mounting guard, and of dressing according to regulation. This last appears to be the greatest grievance of all. A soldier, even in uniform, seems to take a pleasure in making himself look as unmilitary as possible, and his chief care appears to be to evade or defy the orders issued respecting the precise quantity of accoutrements to be worn, and the manner of wearing them. Droll exhibitions are sometimes made by the cadets of Barrackpore, who, ere the first gloss has faded from the uniforms which were the objects of their school-

day ambition, ape the toil-worn soldier, and grumble over the annoyance of "being in harness."

The regulations in force respecting the Indian army are framed, however, with the greatest attention to the comfort of both privates and officers. During the hot weather, the uniform is composed of white calico decorated with the regimental button, and officers upon duty are only required to wear a jacket, which is termed a *raggee*, and which may be made of the thinnest scarlet or blue cashmere, China crape, or China silk; frock coats are often manufactured of the latter material, and worn in undress, while young civilians, who, though under no such restrictions, are not fond of exhibiting themselves in the guise of a barber or a cook, appear in swallow-tailed coats of China crape, which, when well-made, are often mistaken for cloth. At set dinners, where to arrive in deshabille might be considered as an affront, the male guests, if not provided with silk attire, usually direct their bearers (*Anglicè*, valets) to take a white jacket to the entertainer's house, in the hope that they may be invited to substitute it for a more cumbrous garment; and at Calcutta and Barrackpore, where strangers may not be aware that this option will be given them, the master of the mansion usually

issues out a number of jackets from his own wardrobe, which he offers to the new arrivals, and the ante-chambers are straightway converted into dressing-rooms. It is only at grand parties, and under the surveillance of general officers, that the military guests are compelled to endure the horrors of warm clothing; but there are some commandants, who are themselves such dried-up and withered anatomies, that they have no compassion for the more corpulent portion of their species, and compel those who have the misfortune to be placed under their control, to submit to a process to which the sufferings of a Newmarket jockey in training are nothing. The exceeding ugliness of the dress adopted by the most refined nations of Europe is in no place more apparent than in India, where it is contrasted with the flowing garments of the natives, and where absolute necessity obliges the wearers to have it frabricated from the same materials which compose the wide trowsers and graceful vests of their attendants. The round sailor's jacket and tight trowsers, brought by the early factors from their ships, have obtained to this day in India, and while less elegant native customs have found universal favour in European eyes, the greatest possible distinction in dress has been

thought necessary. Without pretending to discuss the wisdom of this policy, it may be said that the effect is absolutely shocking to persons of any taste. At Calcutta and Barrackpore, the barbarisms in dress are the most striking, for custom renders them familiar, and by the time that the travellers have reached the Upper Provinces, they have become habituated, if not reconciled, to the sight of gentlemen clothed from head to foot in ill-shaped garments of white cotton, in which the greatest dandy can only distinguish himself by the quantity of the starch.

The cemetery at Barrackpore is better kept than most places of a similar kind in India. It stands in a cheerful situation, not far from the park, and quite close to a handsome residence belonging to an officer on the staff, whose lovely and healthy family, while the writer partook of the ready hospitalities of his mansion, afforded a pleasing contradiction to the tale told by the too numerous graves and monuments. But the climate of Barrackpore must not be estimated by the number of deaths which take place in it, since persons in ill-health, from the Upper Provinces, frequently breathe their last at this place, upon the eve of their embarkation for Europe, and new arrivals from colder countries fall

victims to imprudencies, which cannot be committed with impunity in any part of India.

Dum Dum, the cantonment selected for the head-quarters of the Bengal artillery, does not owe so much to nature as its neighbouring military station. The lines occupy an extensive plain, unmarked by any feature worthy of peculiar notice, the little beauty it possesses being entirely the work of art: handsome houses are scattered irregularly about, with pleasure-grounds around them, which are generally planted with care and taste. The mess-room and its accompaniments form a very superb building, affording suites of apartments upon a far more magnificent scale than those belonging to any European barrack. The splendour of Woolwich fades before the grandeur of Dum Dum; but the balls, which are given in the latter place every month are not kept up with the same degree of spirit which characterizes the parties at Woolwich, and even when the dulness which frequently pervades Calcutta might be supposed to render them of great importance, are very ill-attended by visitors from the presidency. Thirty or forty ladies, occupying the top of an immense apartment, surrounded by all the beaux who have any hope of being noticed by them, afford a tantalising spectacle to crowds of

young men, taking up their modest stations at a distance, and looking at the dance without daring to indulge the slightest expectation of having an opportunity of joining in it. The ladies, not suffered to repose during a single quadrille, may well envy the most forlorn coteries of neglected damsels in England, condemned to patience and a bench without a chance of being invited to quit their seats, for the duties imposed upon them are of a very arduous nature, and to refuse to dance at all, according to the custom of male exquisites at home, too much in request, would give such deep offence, that few parents or guardians allow their fair charges to incur the odium.

The society at Dum Dum has not yet recovered from the paralyzing effect produced by the diminution of the *batta*. In the first alarm and terror, lest pay and allowances of every kind should sustain similar clipping and curtailing, many amusements and indulgencies were relinquished; and now that the panic has subsided, some from motives of economy, and others from the apprehension that too great a display of superfluous cash so near the seat of government, might sanction a farther reduction, have wholly withdrawn their support from the theatre and other public amusements of

the place. In former times, the dramatic performances at Dum Dum almost rivalled those of Chowringee. It was not unusual to find an actor of considerable merit, and one who had become thoroughly acquainted with stage-business on the boards of a minor theatre in London, amongst the recruits enlisted for the artillery; such experience is frequently more valuable than talent in the raw material, for amateurs require a good deal of drilling before they can be brought to attend to the minutiæ of such great importance to the effect of a play. Dum Dum, in its best days, has boasted performers sufficiently attractive to bring an audience from Calcutta; but it has shared in the general depression of theatrical property; few stars illumine its declining glories, and the once-crowded parterre exhibits a beggarly account of empty benches. Occasionally an attempt is made to revive the good old times; but they have all failed, and were it not for the persevering efforts of a few stage-struck heroes, who are content to perform to thin houses, rather than not at all, lamps would no longer twinkle on the degenerate boards of the Dum Dum theatre. Its external appearance is not very prepossessing; but in that respect it is not much worse than its proud neighbour in Chow-

ringee, which boasts little outward architectural display, though the interior is both handsome and commodious.

While upon the subject of theatricals, in and near the Presidency, an exhibition more strange than amusing should not pass unnoticed; the performance, or rather the attempted performance, of English plays by Hindoo youths: an undertaking which, as it may readily be supposed, was not crowned with much success. This inauspicious beginning, however, may lead to better things; native aspirants for the honours of the sock and buskin may perceive the propriety of confining themselves to the representation of dramas to which their complexion would be appropriate; and when the catalogue of European plays is exhausted, and the Aurungzebes and Tamerlanes have run themselves out of favour, authors may start up amidst the corps, and employ their pens in illustrating the public and domestic occurrences of their country, in tragedy, comedy, opera, and farce. Though the execution might not be first-rate, such productions could not fail to be extremely curious and interesting; they would lead to a better acquaintance with the manners and customs of the people of Hindostan, and prevent such monstrous exhibitions as

are presented to this enlightened age, in dramas resembling those styled "The *Cataracts* of the Ganges," "The Lions of Mysore," &c.

A fair proportion of the beauty and fashion of Calcutta is sometimes to be seen at the grand reviews and field-days of the artillery at Dum Dum; but these splendid military spectacles do not attract so large a concourse of gazers as might be expected. Anglo-Indians are not to be stimulated to exertion by any ordinary degree of excitement; they speedily lose that passion for sight-seeing, which at home induces crowds of people to brave dust, fatigue, hunger, and lowering clouds; they will not put themselves out of their way except upon very great occasions, and never voluntarily encounter a tenth-part of the risk dared by the fashionable world in England at archery-meetings, horticultural-breakfasts, races, and reviews, where perils by land or by water, upsets in crowded roads, deluges in open carriages, with the impossibility of getting any thing to eat at inns full to suffocation, present a catalogue of evils sufficient to detain every person possessed of common prudence at home. The settled state of the weather, in the cold season in India, must remove all apprehensions from those skyey influences, which have

such a fatal effect upon out-of-door amusements in England; but ships are launched, and military manœuvres practised, without attracting many spectators.

Dum Dum possesses a good station-library, which is amply furnished with new publications as they come out from England. There are few places in India where young officers have the advantage of so many opportunities of improving their minds, and of fitting themselves for their profession; its vicinity to Calcutta enables them to procure books and instruction upon scientific subjects difficult of attainment in more remote cantonments; enough of mental relaxation may be found in the society, which is large and cheerful, without being dissipated; and temptations to idleness are not so great as at Barrackpore, the grand thoroughfare to the Upper Provinces, and a place which no stranger landing at Calcutta omits to visit.

Dum Dum is much less frequented, the scenery possessing little attraction; there are, however, some mansions in the neighbourhood, belonging to rich natives, which are objects of great interest and curiosity to Europeans. One of these, inhabited by a rajàh, is distinguished for its menagerie, the only one of the kind now existing in Bengal, that

at Barrackpore Park being dismantled. The collection has been greatly enriched by the donations of the present Governor-general, who presented the animals, which formerly inhabited the cages in the Park, to a gentleman less alarmed by the expense of their maintenance. The specimens of the wild tribes of Bengal exhibited in this zoological garden are superb; but the collection is, of course, deficient in the less known natives of the upper and hilly districts of India, the forest denizens of Nipal, which will not live in the hot season in the plains, and for which it would be so desirable to have a dépôt near the coast, whence they might be shipped at the end of the cold weather for England. Doubtless, some arrangement of this nature will take place in the course of a few years, and the visitors of European menageries will be delighted with the sight of animals which they have hitherto only known from the descriptions of travellers.

A garden-house, about four miles from Dum Dum, on the road to Calcutta, the occasional residence of Dwarknâuth Tagore, a rich and highly intelligent native gentleman, possesses many attractions to Europeans, who gladly avail themselves of the hospitalities of the courteous owner. Dwarknauth Tagore converses fluently in English with

his guests, whom he receives entirely after the European fashion, permitting (although a Hindoo) fowls and butchers' meat, with the exception of beef, to appear at his well-covered table, at which he occupies a seat, challenging the company, the ladies especially, to take wine, but refraining from the more solid food which is placed before him. The house is a beautiful and commodious structure, furnished in the best taste, and strictly in accordance with our ideas of Asiatic luxury, though differing widely from the real state of things in native houses; sofas, stools, and ottomans abound; some of the rooms are hung with fine engravings, and others are decorated with the best specimens of original paintings which Calcutta can afford; several excellent portraits, from the pencil of Mr. George Beechey, and some clever productions from other European artists who have bent their steps to India. The tables are covered with books of prints, and portfolios of the most splendid description; in short, it is a most delightful retreat, the gardens and pleasure-grounds being laid out in a style correspondent with the interior. The entertainments given by Dwarknauth Tagore, at this charming mansion, are very frequent, and he delights in obliging his friends by lending it for the

wedding-abode of brides and bridegrooms, who, in India, are rarely so fortunate as to be enabled to follow the English fashion of making an excursion during the honey-moon, on account of the scarcity of hotels and country-houses at their disposal. Ishara, Barrackpore, Dum Dum, and Garden Reach, afford asylums for newly-married couples, who are blessed with accommodating friends ready to vacate and lend their houses for the occasion; but these lucky individuals bear no proportion to the numbers who, after the celebration of their nuptials in the cathedral, are compelled to retire quietly, and without the slightest *éclât*, to their own homes, and to fall in at once to the domestic routine, for which it is considered more advisable to have some preparation. No place in the neighbourhood of Calcutta can be better suited for the scene of bridal happiness than the delightful country-mansion of Dwarknauth Tagore. Here are charming gardens to walk in, secluded rides and drives for evening exercise, and books and pictures to supply subjects for conversation, when those sweet topics are exhausted which, only in the days of courtship, are believed to afford never-ending resources.

CHAPTER X.

MADRAS, SERINGAPATAM, AND BANGALORE.

THAT the native armies of Madras and Bombay are equal, in the field, in strength, vigour, and good conduct, to that of Bengal, there is no doubt: officers of the King's service, who, at different periods, have commanded in the three presidencies, have given the most honourable testimony to the merits of all. But the Bengal sepoy has the advantage of a finer person and a more military air; perhaps, however, it would be more correct to say, the sepoys of the Bengal army,—since the province which gives its name to the presidency does not furnish the soldiers, who are principally composed of high-caste men from the Upper Provinces, Rajpoots, Patans, and Moghuls of good family.

The lounging, dishevelled habits, produced by the climate, have assuredly a deteriorating effect upon the style and bearing of European officers in the Company's service. These gentlemen have certainly nothing of the Prussian school about

them ; none of the upright, ramrod stiffness, which disciplinarians consider so essential, and which in Europe usually distinguishes a soldier from his fellow-citizens. The Madrassees, as they are called, pique themselves a little upon the carelessness of their dress, and, when off duty, assume a nonchalant manner, and a neglect of the etiquette of military costume, which savours somewhat of affectation, and affords some sanction to the assumption of superiority on the part of the Bengal officer. It is said that, at the Cape of Good Hope (a place much frequented by visitants in search of health from the three presidencies, all of whom are characterized by the general designation of Hindoo), the officer of the Madras army is known by the deranged or dilapidated state of his attire; that it is not uncommon to see him lounging about in a jacket so much the worse for wear as not to possess its full complement of buttons. Women, who are very quick-sighted in such matters, perceive at a glance the least violation of military proprieties, and the lower classes especially are wont to express their opinion in no measured terms. A half-caste lady in Calcutta, considering herself aggrieved by an officer from the neighbouring presidency, after exhausting every abusive epithet which the language could afford, wound up

a striking peroration by calling him "a little Madras major:" the force of railing could no farther go. It is proper, however, to say that there are different opinions on the subject; by some it is averred that the Bengal troops, though finer and larger men than those of the coast army, are not so smart-looking under arms, and that they do not move, or handle their muskets, with the precision and soldier-like steadiness of the Madras native infantry. These conflicting testimonies serve to convince indifferent persons that there is no real superiority in either; the claims of the Bengal establishment rest principally upon the height and good looks of the natives of the Upper Provinces of Hindostan, who are usually tall, stout, handsome men. There will always be a little jealousy between the rival establishments; and as the Bengalees live in a style of splendour which their fellow-soldiers do not attempt, they assume a pre-eminence which is generally acceded to them.

Those who have been accustomed to the luxuries of the capital of British India, the trains of servants in waiting, and the princely accommodations of the houses, are apt to disparage the customs and modes of living at Madras; but the traveller surveys with delight the splendid architectural remains

and picturesque beauties of southern India. The panorama of Madras, lately exhibited in London, afforded to its numerous visitants a striking and faithful representation of the military array of the fort, the glittering palace-like public offices, and the minarets, churches, and pagodas, embosomed in trees, which line the surf-bound coast of this singular and truly oriental city. But the imposing air of grandeur and pomp, produced by the magnificent dimensions, architectural ornaments, and, above all, the marble brightness of the shell-mortar with which the government edifices are coated, is diminished, on a nearer approach, by the absence of the regular streets and squares, which give so much of a metropolitan air to the stately avenues of Calcutta. The roads, planted on either side with trees, the villas *chunamed* with the glittering material already mentioned, and nestling in gardens, where the richest flush of flowers is tempered by the grateful shade of umbrageous groves, leave nothing to be wished for that can delight the eye or enchant the imagination. Here are to be seen, in the most lavish abundance, the plume-like, broad-leaved plantain, the gracefully-drooping bamboo, the proud coronet of the coco, waving with every breeze, the fan-leaf of the still taller palm, the delicate areca, the obelisk-

like aloe, and the majestic banian, with its dropping branches, the giant arms outspreading from a columnar and strangely convoluted trunk, and precipitating pliant fibrous strings, which plant themselves in the earth below, and add their support to the splendid canopy above them.

The climate of Madras is considered to be less sultry than that of Bengal; those stations which are situated on the highest ground of the table-land enjoy a very agreeable temperature. The large cantonment of Bangalore is 3,000 feet above the level of the sea, and the thermometer rarely rises above 80°; but the duties of the civil and military servants of the presidency often call them to less favoured places; and those who have suffered under the prostrating effects of a Mysore fever, have no reason to rejoice that their destinies did not lead them to Bengal.

In spite, however, of its pestilential climate, there are few places in the peninsula more attractive to a visitor than the scene of the splendid victory gained by the British arms in 1799. The island of Seringapatam, which is surrounded on every side by the Cavery, a wide and rapid river, to which the Carnatic owes its agricultural wealth, is a place of great beauty and fertility; but the reminiscences

connected with it are of a nature too overpowering to permit the mind to dwell upon minor circumstances.

The departure from every rule of honourable warfare in the cruel treatment of his British prisoners, together with many other acts of tyranny and oppression, have branded the name of Tippoo Saib with everlasting infamy; yet, notwithstanding much that is wholly indefensible in his conduct, it may be doubted whether he deserves all the opprobrium which has been cast upon his character. A modern, and an unquestionable authority, assures us that Tippoo's government could not have been very oppressive, since his resources were almost inexhaustible, and the cities, towns, and villages of his dominions, with few and slight exceptions, were in a flourishing state. Notwithstanding the frequency of his wars, his accumulation of personal property was immense. He had, during a long series of years, maintained very large bodies of troops, and kept up his fortresses, and replenished his treasury. His subjects were rich, and his army well-appointed and faithful.

The fortunate person by whose hand the son of Hyder met his death, remains to this day unknown, nor has it ever been ascertained whether the jewels

which adorned his person became the spoil of friends or foes. When the corpse was discovered, it was found divested of all its ornaments. He was known to wear a ruby ring constantly upon his finger, which he esteemed to be the finest in his treasury, and the value of the string of pearls, or rosary, about his neck, was almost incalculable. The gems, of which it was composed, were the largest and richest India could produce; they had been the collection of many years, and were the pride of his dress. Whenever a pearl of extraordinary size and lustre was brought to him for sale, he became the purchaser, and strung it on this precious necklace, in the place of one of inferior value; and as he never appeared without this favourite ornament, there is no doubt of its having fallen into the hands of some lucky adventurer, who concealed the knowledge of so great a prize. His turban was also always adorned with a jewel of price, but that had disappeared: an amulet, powerless to save, alone was left upon an arm which had threatened the subversion of the British Government in India.

One cannot be surprised that the riches gained at the taking of Seringapatam should still be fresh in men's minds, and that notwithstanding the scarcity of "barbaric pearl and gold," India should to this

day be esteemed a sort of garden of Aladdin, where clustering rubies, the flashing diamond, and the changeful opal, court the passenger's acceptance. An enormous quantity of jewels found their way to Europe after the capture of Seringapatam. The houses of the chief sirdars, as well as those of the shroffs, were completely pillaged. The terrified inmates of the zenanas, anxious only to preserve their lives, came forth with all their treasures, and offered their jewels as a ransom. Fortunately, the palace was not made the scene of indiscriminate plunder; it was secured in time, and its immense riches were thus preserved for more equal distribution to the conquering army. The treasures contained in this palace consisted of jewels, gold and silver plate, rich stuffs, valuable MSS., and various other articles of great price and rarity. The quantity of money discovered, though great in itself, was not commensurate with the expectations raised by the report of Tippoo's vast resources. It is supposed that much remains still concealed, although the confidence of the besieged not being shaken until the fortress had fallen into the possession of the enemy, little or no precaution was taken to secure property of any description. India still affords a fertile field for the treasure-seeker. In

traversing the ruined portions of once-flourishing cities, destined by the fortunes of war to frequent changes of masters, it is impossible to avoid wishing for the divining rod, of which we read, to direct the search of the money-digger; for doubtless immense riches still lie buried where the terrors of the Moghul and the Mahratta have prevailed.

The enormous mass of wealth accumulated by Tippoo Saib, though hoarded up without regard to ornamental arrangement, and without being made subservient to the embellishments of the palace, were registered with great care. The captors found every article labelled according to its entry in the corresponding catalogue. Very extensive buildings, including the greater part of the palace, were appropriated to the reception of the treasure; a series of quadrangles, surrounded by store-houses having open galleries above, were appropriated to those articles which were least susceptible of injury. The jewels, carefully deposited in coffers, were kept in large dark chambers, behind one of the halls of audience. The plate, both gold and silver, was preserved in the same manner. The jewellery was set in gold in the form of bracelets, rings, necklaces, plumes, aigrettes, sword-belts, &c., and the workmanship was not inferior to the value

of the material. We have a record of one necklace, which seems to have been wrought by a hand not less cunning than that of the wondrous Florentine. It was composed, says Major Moor, of fifteen or twenty chains of gold, each link being a very small bunch of grapes, of most exquisite workmanship; the number of links or bunches of grapes must have amounted to many thousands, they were so minute. The chains were nearly five feet long, connected by a pair of splendid clasps of diamonds and rubies. The value placed upon it at Seringapatam, sixty pounds, fell infinitely short of its real worth, taking the workmanship into consideration. One of the galleries containing two *howdahs*, made of solid silver; and some of the plate was richly inlaid with gold, and set with jewels.

Tippoo, it is said, whose love of hoarding was insatiable, passed the greater part of his leisure hours in reviewing and examining the acquisitions of his successful ambition. His love of literature was not inferior to his love of wealth; he possessed a large and curious library, arranged after his own fashion, in a manner little according with European ideas. The books were kept in chests, each volume having a separate wrapper, so that they were for the most part in excellent preservation. These

books, it is supposed, must all have been collected by Tippoo himself since his father was too illiterate to have possesed any taste for reading.

The garden-houses and pavilions of Tippoo Saib are now frequently occupied by European officers, whom military duty or curiosity leads to Seringapatam, and who, of course, receive the most courteous attentions from the heads of the reigning family. A large mansion in the Dowlut Baugh, amongst other decorations, is ornamented with a painting representing the defeat of Colonel Baillie; in which the artist, more intent upon pleasing his patron than in giving a faithful delineation of the scene, has taken care not only to depict the conquering Hyder after the most triumphant fashion, but to exaggerate the disasters and distresses of the enemy. Nothing can be more wretched than the execution of this design; but the colours are bright and gaudy, and the whole as fresh as when it delighted the eyes of the invader and his less fortunate son, the British Government not choosing to deface or remove this trophy of bygone days. Few persons can now indulge in a sojurn in the Dowlut Baugh without experiencing some injurious attack of disease; the whole island retains its fatal power over European constitutions, and from time immemorial

it has only been the natives of the soil who could successfully resist the deleterious effects of the climate. We are told, that out of many thousand natives compulsorily brought by Hyder and his son from the Malabar coast, and forced to settle in the new territory, only five hundred survived at the end of ten years to relate the story of their tragic expulsion from their own homes; and five years sufficed to reduce the number of European officers and artificers, in the sultan's service, imported from the Isle of France, from five hundred to twenty-five. Notwithstanding its comparative salubrity, the cemetery of the neighbouring station, Bangalore, is but too well filled with the victims to the fevers so prevalent in southern India.

Bangalore is rendered peculiarly interesting to the English visitant, from its having been selected as a place of confinement for many of the prisoners taken in the wars of Hyder and his son with the British Government. A large wheel for drawing water is still in existence, in a garden adjoining the palace of Hyder Ally, in the native fort, about two miles from the present cantonments, at which that despot, who was ignorant of every rule of honourable warfare, compelled his captives to work. During the reign of Tippoo Saib, upwards of

twenty officers shared the same prison for a dreary interval of four years, the miseries of captivity being cruelly augmented by the continual expectation of death in its worst form. The little intelligence they could obtain of the state of affairs beyond their prison wall was conveyed to them by a native butcher, who frequently enclosed a letter in the head of a sheep, which, being severed from the body, he flung into the prison. Suspicion fell upon this faithful fellow, but he would confess nothing, notwithstanding the attempt made to intimidate him by tying him to the mouth of a loaded gun. Immediately upon his release, he proceeded to perform the duties of his avocation, and, undaunted by the recollection of previous peril, resorted to the old mode of communication, and beheading a sheep, whose teeth were tightly closed upon a letter, flung it with reckless daring amongst the assembled officers, who subsequently owed their lives to the determination which they evinced to resist the attempts made to intimidate them. Two of these prisoners still survive to tell the tale—the rest have gone to their graves: and it is melancholy to add, that several became the victims of indulgences by which they sought to indemnify themselves for the hardships and mortifications they had been made to undergo.

Bangalore, though not equalling in aspect the luxuriant, though deleterious beauty of the adjacent territories, is prettily situated in a moderately-wooded and well-watered country; there are barracks for two King's regiments, one of cavalry and one of infantry; and in addition, the garrison consists of three Native Infantry and one Cavalry regiments, with a proportionate number of battalions of artillery, the requisite staff, &c.

Bangalore has always been distinguished, throughout the Madras presidency, for its festivities. It possesses very handsome assembly-rooms, and a theatre, in which the amateur performances are often above par. These latter entertainments have been found so attractive, that persons, anxious to uphold the honour of the station, have been induced to make an authenticated report, by which it has been shewn that the number of representations of a popular piece, with reference to the bills of mortality in both places, has in the theatre at Bangalore equalled that of *Mother Goose* at Covent Garden. The fancy balls are upon a grand scale; and the very beautiful little theatre being at the extreme end of the assembly-rooms, and therefore easily thrown open when necessary, the effect of the whole is magnificent. No expense is spared upon

these entertainments; the bands of the several regiments are in attendance, and a flourish of trumpets gives the glad summons to supper. When the society happens to be composed of choice spirits, amusements of this nature go off with great *éclat*. The superior size and loftiness of reception-rooms in India, render them much better adapted for large assemblages than those belonging to the same class of society in England; and even in the most sultry seasons, less inconvenience is sustained from the heat, the nights being always comparatively cool, and a free circulation of air secured by the multitude of open doors. The danger of failure is occasioned by the difficulty of getting the party to harmonize; dull, disagreeable people are to be found every where; and when these preponderate, the meeting, intended to be festive, must of course be "stale, flat, and unprofitable."

During the cold season, the European residents of Bangalore amuse themselves with pic-nic parties, there being numerous objects of curiosity in the vicinity to attract the visitant. There is nothing throughout Hindostan to equal the remains of southern India; the pagodas of Benares, and even those of Bindrabund and Muttra, are mean in comparison to the splendid temples which are spread

deeds were perpetrated. A wild jungly plain, a village with its mosque or pagoda in the distance, scattered groups occupying the foreground, some cooking, some smoking, others singing to the sound of a drum; baggage piled around, with bullocks stretched beside it, and here and there a few ponies picketed. A faint streak of red light bordering the distant horizon, and night falling like a cloud upon the murderers, their victims, and the open graves.

By an official document, dated in 1816, already alluded to, it appears that the state of the country was at that period such as to call the attention of the government to the dreadful scenes daily acted upon the open thoroughfares, and as they will be found to add considerably to our stock of information concerning bands of robbers of a very singular description, they are here subjoined.

"In the part of India to which the present report relates,* there would appear to be five distinct classes of Thugs or Phansegars, who rob and murder on the high-way.

"1st class.—The high-roads leading through Etawah, Allyghur, and Furruckabad, are for the most part the scenes of the atrocities committed by these

* The Upper Provinces of Hindostan.

gangs. In 1811 a list of sixty-eight persons, called *Junadars*, composing a band, was given into this office by confederates, who were induced to deliver themselves up to Colonel Gardiner, under the hope of pardon. They were all Moosulmauns, and chiefly of the Kewattee tribe. By the confessions made by these people, they appear to have carried on their malpractices in small parties, assuming various disguises, resorting to the *serais*, and accompanying travellers under suspicious pretences, to have watched their opportunity for the destruction of their victims in retired places, commonly by strangulation: the knife being used to perfect the work, and the bodies being usually thrown into wells or *nullahs*. Deleterious drugs are said to be used only by novices in the business, the more experienced Thugs trusting rather to the certain effects of the knife or the cord, than to the doubtful operation of poison. These murders are most frequent in the hot winds, at which season travellers are induced to start from their halting places before daylight to avoid the heat.

"2d class.—This class consists exclusively of Hindoos, and chiefly of the Soehd tribe; they are stated to pass themselves on travellers as Brahmins and Kaits, and are reported to be much more nu-

merous than the first class. The scene of their depredations has been for the most part in the confines of Etawah, and the western *thannahs* of the Cawnpore district, and they are stated to be ostensibly engaged in cultivating small patches of ground, though in fact supported by the more lucrative profession of Thuggy.

"3d class.—This class was formerly settled in the pergunnas of Sindana and Purkham, from whence they were expelled, and have since taken up their residence in Mahratta villages on the confines of our territories, where the aumils of the native government are said to derive a revenue from their depredations. From the examinations given in the appendix, it would appear that these Thugs are Moosulmauns and Hindoos of various tribes. The murders committed by these gangs appear to be perpetrated more openly than those accomplished by the first two classes, whole parties being destroyed together, and the bodies of their victims being frequently found unburied on the plains. The depredations of these desperadoes are said to have formerly extended over different parts of the Dooab, but latterly to have been devoted to the country near Gwalior, and to the district of Bun-

delkund, in which it does not appear that the crime of murder by Thugs was known prior to 1812; but in consequence of the dispersion of the Sindanee Thugs, no fewer than nineteen instances of the offence were ascertained in 1813, in which year thirty-five bodies were found with marks of the knife or cord. Very considerable gangs of these people are said to be at present collected in the Mahratta states. Mr. Wauchope, on the 21st instant, writes: 'But a few weeks have elapsed since a party of forty-two persons, men, women, and children, were every one strangled by a large body of Thugs. The travellers were coming from Jubbelpore towards Purnah, and the murders took place about the frontier between the Nagpore and Purnah country. Four of the miscreants were seized by an officer of the Purnah chief.' It would appear from examination in this office, that the punishment of this offence, in some of the Mahratta states, is by enclosing the criminal alive in a pillar of masonry. The first magistrate of Etawah writes, that a gang of Thugs, seized not long since by the chieftain, Meer Khan, were subjected to amputation of each hand, and to loss of their noses.

"4th class.—Several instances of murder on the

It is certainly entertaining to a stranger to watch the effect of music upon the serpent tribe. Very well authenticated accounts are upon record of their being charmed from their hiding-places by the sound of a pipe or flageolet; and those which have been tamed are constantly exhibited dancing to the melody produced by this simple instrument. They stand erect upon their tails, and move about, bending their heads, and undulating their bodies in accordance with the measure. The *cobra capella* is the dancing-snake of the East, and the production of the snake-stone is exclusively confined to

cealed stone; but stoutly maintained that he fairly caught the first; and that, although the semi-transparent, amber-like stones were altogether fictitious, the opaque concretion was sometimes, though not often, found in the reptile's head; and that it really had some of the virtues ascribed to it. He good-humouredly blamed me for exposing him—hinting that credulity was the easy parent of craft; and somewhat slyly said something Hudibrastically equivalent to the assertion that

—— the pleasure is as great
In being cheated, as to cheat."

Major Moor bought many of these stones, and although, as they multiplied on his hands, he began to suspect that "he was not one of the wisest men in the world;" he still cannot entirely shake off the belief that these stones are actually taken out of the reptile's head, and have some anti-poisonous virtue.

this species. There is not, it is said, much difficulty in extracting the poison of a serpent, which is contained in a very small reservoir, running along the palate of the mouth, and passing out at each fang: the natives are supposed to be very dexterous in forcing their captives to eject this venom, and are then enabled to handle them without the least danger. Some persons, however, well acquainted with the habits of snake-charmers, deny that they extract the poison, and attribute the impunity with which they handle these dangerous reptiles to their accurate knowledge of the temper and disposition of the animal, and their ready method of soothing down irritation. The natives boast the possession of various antidotes to the bite of a snake, and often pretend to have imbibed the venom and effected a cure. There is a plant which goes by the name of *chandraca*, in which considerable confidence is placed; and arsenic, which enters very largely into the composition of the celebrated Tanjore pill, is often employed as a counteracting power. Volatile alkalis are most generally tried by European practitioners, and very often prove successful; but the different degrees of strength in the venom of snakes render it doubtful whether in the worst cases they would have any

beneficial effect. Some medical men aver, that the bite of a *cobra capella* in full vigour, and in possession of all its poisonous qualities, is as speedily fatal as a pistol-ball; and that it is only when this poison is weakened by expenditure, that medicine can be of any avail.

THE END.

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